

APOLLO KORZENIOWSKI'S *POLAND AND MUSCOVY*

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Apollo Korzeniowski's treatise entitled *Poland and Muscovy* has escaped the attention of scholars writing about the attitudes of Poles towards Russia in the post-partition era; to date only general summaries of the work have appeared in biographical notes on this "forgotten poet". Presenting the essential idea of Korzeniowski's "treatise-cum-memoir", Czesław Miłosz rightly warns us against the rash tendency to ascribe nationalism to its author.¹ In his turn, Roman Taborski, while granting the work "some documentary value", defines it as "a sad testimony to a loss of perspicacity in this writer, who used to be so discerning in evaluating social phenomena", adding that the treatise is "a historiosophic study which is imbued with extreme national chauvinism and continues the traditions of messianist ideology" by idealising Poland's historical past and vilifying the Russian nation.² In his pithy observation, Zdzisław Najder aptly emphasises the fact that "this embittered disquisition [...] deals, in passionate tones, with Russo-Polish relations from the time of the first partition" and with Russia's place in Europe. Korzeniowski, Najder adds, shows Russia against the historical background of "a struggle between barbarism and civilization" as "a contemporary embodiment of Asiatic, Tartar, and Byzantine barbarism", thus accusing Western Europe of a "cowardly or naive attitude towards Russia".³

However true these views may seem, they fail to do adequate justice to the content, the character and the aim of Korzeniowski's *Poland and Muscovy*. They do not take into account the connection between Apollo's reflections and the views, or rather

¹ Czesław Miłosz. "Apollo N. Korzeniowski: Joseph Conrad's Father". Trans. Reuel K. Wilson. *Mosaic. A Journal for the Comparative Study of Literature and Ideas Published by the University of Manitoba Press* 1971–1972, No. VI/4, p. 136; cf. Cz. Miłosz. "Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski". *Kultura* (Paris) 1956, No. 2, pp. 76–77.

² Roman Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski. Ostatni dramatopisarz romantyczny*. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1957, pp. 116–117, 130.

³ Zdzisław Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*. Trans. Halina Najder. Rochester, New York: Camden House, 2007, pp. 23–24; cf. Z. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*. Lublin: Wydawnictwo Gaudium, 2006, Vol. I, pp. 47–48.

convictions, of a contemporary generation facing yet another battle with the Russian Empire – with “Muscovy”, as it was popularly known – which until the beginning of the 20th century was considered to have been the main perpetrator of the crime of the partitions, which resulted in Poland’s continuing enslavement. The present study discusses some of these issues in an attempt to shed new light on the image of Conrad’s father, his spiritual nature and especially his political stance. I will attempt to draw a more distinct portrait of this man: a tragic, romantically feverish figure who was filled with an ardent desire to take an active part in the fight for Poland’s independence and who was not willing to be content with small victories in this struggle. During the 1863 January Uprising – as an exile – he refused to be a passive witness to the struggle: *Poland and Muscovy* was his contribution to the fight against “the invasion”, as Russian rule was then called.

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The vicissitudes of the personal and artistic life of Apollo Korzeniowski, Joseph Conrad’s father – who was born on 21st February 1820 in a manor house in the village of Honoratka in the Kiev Governorate – are well known thanks to Roman Taborski’s biography, written a quarter of a century ago (and bearing the marks of its time⁴) and also thanks to Zdzisław Najder’s studies on Joseph Conrad.⁵ However, the truth is that this “last of the Romantic playwrights” is well known only to experts on old Polish literature. For our purposes, it is significant that it was his background, family tradition, upbringing and education, his literary output and – finally – his private and political life that determined the ideological views expressed in the title *Poland and Muscovy*.

Korzeniowski’s education at the secondary school and university level took place during the reactionary reforms of the educational system in Russia initiated in 1824 by the “liberal-minded” Tsar Alexander I and dictated by a feeling of distrust towards educated people on the part of the imperial authorities and by their hostility towards “*volnodumstvo*” or any other revolutionary tendencies. The reforms had already been completed in the reign of Nicholas I: between 1828 and 1833 new regulations reorganising lower, middle and higher education in the Empire were introduced and after 1833 they were also implemented in the Kingdom of Poland.⁶ Universities were “reformed” in 1835: the possibilities of studying outside Russia were limited, universities lost their autonomy and professors and students alike were subjected to curator and/or police supervision. “In our Russia,” stressed an officer of the secret police, “scholars

⁴ Taborski, *Apollo Korzeniowski*.

⁵ Najder, *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*. Vols. I–II; Zdzisław Najder, *Joseph Conrad’s parents*. [In:] *Conrad in Perspective. Essays on Art and Fidelity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997, p. 18 f.; cf. Z. Najder, *Rodzice Conrada*. [In:] *Sztuka i wierność. Szkice o twórczości Josepha Conrada*. Opole: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Opolskiego, 2000, p. 25 ff.; *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego. Dokumenty rodzinne, listy, wspomnienia*. Ed. Zdzisław Najder and Joanna Skolik. Lublin: Wydawnictwo Gaudium, 2006.

⁶ Jan Kucharczyński, *Epoka Paskiewiczowska. Losy oświaty*. Warszawa–Kraków: Gebethner i Wolff, 1914, pp. 13–20.

ought to act like apothecaries, dispensing wisdom only according to the government's prescription".⁷ The prescription came from Sergei Uvarov, who was Minister of Public Education between 1835 and 1849, in accordance with his ideological formula of "Autocracy, Orthodoxy and Nationality". For Uvarov, the main task was Russification of the "Taken Lands" – Lithuania and Ruthenia. This was an element of the struggle between two civilisations – Polish and Russian, Western and Eastern – "the perennial struggle with the spirit of Poland", as the minister wrote in 1838.⁸

The reorganisation of the school system in the "Taken Lands" gathered momentum after the fall of the November Uprising (1830–31). In 1832 the Vilnius Educational District was abolished and the Polish University in Vilnius was closed down, as was the "Lyceum" in Kremenets, whose "secret mission" – in the words of Russian dignitaries – was to "Polonise the indigenous Russian and Orthodox western governorates of the Empire".⁹ The process of Russifying the educational system in Lithuania and Ruthenia was formally completed in 1835. The first casualties were Polish schools – "the pillar of the presumed nationhood of this country". The network of Polish schools was dismantled. The new national schools were essentially Russian institutions as far as the language of instruction and the textbooks were concerned and were run by the State. Secondary education was made available chiefly to children of noblemen, which made universities inaccessible to students from lower social classes. A new Russian university – the University of St. Vladimir – was founded in 1834 in Kiev. The new educational system was meant to "remove, as far as possible, those particular characteristics which so visibly distinguish Polish young people from their Russian counterparts, and in particular to suppress their idea of sovereignty, which has bred the futile pursuit of regaining their long-lost independence". Hence the strong emphasis on a broad programme of teaching Russian history, which "is particularly significant for the western governorates, as it may largely reinforce the political goals of education by uprooting any superstitions held by Polish young people about their common homeland".¹⁰ The consequences of these repressive changes for the standard of education in the "Taken Lands" were catastrophic. Apollo wrote that "school [was] dumbed down by the tsarist language and the tsarist educational system".¹¹ This Russification of schools, which had now become one of the pillars of the autocracy, was accompanied by changes unifying the Empire with the "Western District", as the 9 governorates encompassing the territory of the former Polish Commonwealth were called by the Russians. Poles themselves called them the "Taken Lands". Any remaining pre-partition State and legal institutions were abolished and many Catholic

⁷ Wiktoria Śliwowska. *Sprawa pietraszewców*. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1964, pp. 17–23.

⁸ Kucharzewski, p. 244.

⁹ Michał Rolle. *Ateny Wołyńskie. Szkic z dziejów oświaty w Polsce*. Lviv: Ossolineum, 1923, p. 244.

¹⁰ Kucharzewski, pp. 242–243.

¹¹ *Polska i Moskwa Ojczyzna*. No. 42, 21 June 1864. See: Leszek Zasztowt. *Szkolnictwo na ziemiach litewsko-ruskich (od 1795 roku)*. Warszawa: Instytut Historii Sztuki PAN, 1997, pp. 225–237.

monasteries and schools were closed down. In 1839 the Greek Catholic (or Uniate) Church, regarded by the Russian authorities and the Orthodox Church as a dangerous repository of Polish culture, was annexed by the latter. In 1840 the Statutes of Lithuania were annulled and Russian legislation was introduced, the Russian language becoming obligatory in legal proceedings. Noble local governments lost most of their prerogatives and in the process of the “legitimisation” of noble rights nearly 340 000 members of the Polish nobility (the *szlachta*) were deprived of their noble status. Addressing such noblemen as Korzeniowski himself, the Kiev Governor General Dimitri Bubikov issued the following warning: “You, who are accustomed to six horses for one nobleman, I will reduce to one horse for six noblemen!”¹²

Apollo Korzeniowski’s education can be divided into three stages: home schooling, secondary school and university. In 1859, in a letter to Karol Szajnocha, Korzeniowski revealed: “I have drawn everything – life, thoughts and feelings – from the treasures of my hearth and home”.¹³ This reference to the crucial role of home upbringing and home schooling, which was common in Polish manor houses at the time, especially in the countryside, is very important. If we take the Miłkowski mansion in Podolia as the model of a certain standard of living, we may assume that over several years a child receiving such an education was taught “the complete Scriptures, the entire history of Poland, the physical and political geography of the world and – in the field of arithmetic – operations with integers and fractions as well as the Rule of Three”. Additionally, Latin and German grammar were taught, together with French.¹⁴ Some of the most common educational aids in the whole area between the Dniester and the Dzvina were the *Śpiewy historyczne* (Historical Songs) by Julian Ursyn Niemcewicz, *Pielgrzym w Dobromilu* (A Pilgrim in Dobromyl) by Izabela Czartoryska and *Dzieje Polski. Potocznym sposobem opowiedziane* (The History of Poland. A Colloquial Account) by Joachim Lelewel, published several times in Warsaw until 1831.¹⁵

The atmosphere in Apollo’s family home was certainly patriotic, as the Korzeniowskis stood out amongst all the Polish *szlachta* living in the Ukraine because of their tradition of actively fighting for independence: Apollo’s father had fought in Napoleon’s army and in the November Uprising, earning himself the title of captain

¹² On the social relations and the policy of Russian authorities in Ukraine see: Daniel Beauvois. *Trójkąt ukraiński. Szlachta, carat i lud na Wołyniu, Podolu i Kijowszczyźnie 1793–1914*. Lublin: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Marii Curie-Skłodowskiej, 2005.

¹³ *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*. Ed. Henryk Barycz. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1959, Vol. II, p. 175.

¹⁴ Tomasz Teodor Jeż (Zygmunt Miłkowski). *Od kolebki przez życie. Wspomnienia*. Ed. Adam Lewak. Kraków: Polska Akademia Umiejętności, 1936, Vol. 1, pp. 83–84.

¹⁵ Adam Knot. *Dzieje “Śpiewów historycznych” J.U. Niemcewicza*. “Rocznik Zakładu Narodowego imienia Ossolińskich” 1948, Vol. III, pp. 7–8. M. Novosilcov’s intervention resulted in a ban on using *Śpiewy historyczne* and *Pielgrzym w Dobromilu* at schools as they were considered hostile to Russia. Cf. Bolesław Limanowski. *Pamiętniki (1835–1870)*. Warszawa: Książka i Wiedza, 1957, pp. 37–39.

and several medals for bravery on the battlefield.¹⁶ Even several decades later, “sober” realists castigated the Korzeniowskis for “pursuing irresponsible dreams” and for the fact that, following their hearts more than their reason, they were always ready “to mount [their] horses and chase the enemy out of the country” instead of looking after their family and guarding the interests of the nobility.¹⁷ It was just these Polish traditions and the cultivation of the national spirit in noble mansions that the Russians considered to be particularly dangerous for the Empire. Another concern was literature, including the so-called “depredatory books”. To be sure, in the average manor house, and especially a poorer one, a book was a special guest. However, in richer mansions, where parents were determined to provide a good education for their children, home libraries were common and sometimes even well stocked.¹⁸ Until the 1840s the old custom of rewriting texts from books borrowed from neighbours was still common among the Polish nobility. After 1831 books by authors living in exile appeared in manor houses, often in form of handwritten copies, e.g. of Mickiewicz’s *Dziady* (*Forefathers’ Eve*), which family members “read in the evening behind barred doors [...] occasionally also on the arrival of a guest of the kind that one could divulge such a dangerous secret to”.¹⁹

Apollo Korzeniowski was fully aware of the rapid Russification of the Ukraine, as he was already a teenager at the time. Initially, he attended secondary schools in Kamenets-Podolsky and in Vinnytsia, where until 1832 the Polish educational programme was still in force. Later he attended secondary schools in Nemirov and in Zhytomyr, where the new Russian system had already been introduced.²⁰ The secondary school in Zhytomyr was considered to be one of the best in the Ukraine. In both schools, a great commotion among Polish students was caused by the capture and

¹⁶ Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 4–5; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, p. 21; Miłosz. “Apollo N. Korzeniowski: Joseph Conrad’s Father”, p. 122; cf. Miłosz. “Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski”, p. 61. See Aleksander Jelowicki. *Moje wspomnienia*. Warszawa 1970, pp. 181, 220, 221, 227.

¹⁷ From Bobrowski’s “Memoirs”. [In:] *Conrad under Familial Eyes*. Ed. Zdzisław Najder. Trans. Halina Carroll-Najder. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, pp. 18–19; cf. Tadeusz Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia*. Ed. Stefan Kieniewicz. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1979, Vol. 1, p. 428; cf. *ibid.*, p. 430. Cf. also the 1884 account for Józef Rolle. [In:] M. Rolle. *In illo tempore... Szkice historyczno-literackie*. Brody–Lviv 1914, p. 30: “The Nałęcz family, as we well know, have always been tempestuous, and the Korzeniowskis – talented, outspoken and malicious”. Cf. Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 6–7; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, pp. 23–24.

¹⁸ See Tadeusz Epsztein. *Z piórem i paletą. Zainteresowania intelektualne i artystyczne ziemiaństwa polskiego na Ukrainie w II połowie XIX w.* Warszawa: Neriton, Instytut Historii PAN, 2005, pp. 35 f., 76 ff.

¹⁹ Jeż (Miłkowski). *Od kolebki przez życie*, Vol. 1, pp. 73–74, cf. pp. 28, 40, 46, 60; Leonard Sowiński. *Wspomnienia szkolne*. Warszawa 1884, p. 169.

²⁰ L. Zasztowt. *Kresy 1832–1864. Szkolnictwo na ziemiach litewskich i ruskich dawnej Rzeczypospolitej*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Instytutu Historii PAN, 1997, pp. 211–217.

execution of the most renowned “emissary” – a Polish revolutionary called Szymon Konarski – in Vilnius in 1839. The uncovering of the Polish conspiracy in the Ukraine led to widespread repressions. Zygmunt Miłkowski, who attended the secondary school in Nemirov with Apollo, recalled repressions and investigations carried out by school inspectors. Teachers would warn pupils that “a walk to where sabres are bred” awaited any rebels.²¹ The Russian headmaster of the secondary school in Zhytomyr, parodying Mickiewicz’s *Dziady* and the Polish language, threatened insubordinate students thus:

| | |
|---|--|
| Cyha wszendzia, głucha wszendzia | Dark everywhere, gloom everywhere: |
| co to biendzia, co to biendzia ? | What’s in the air, what’s in the air? |
| Rewolucija biendzia, a tiebia, skotina, | A revolution’s in the air, and you, scoundrel, |
| Wisielica biendzia! ²² | Will hang! |

Clear traces of the impact of these events can be found in Korzeniowski’s writings, for instance in his plays: *Komedia* (Comedy) and especially in *Przedgrom* (Forethunder), which are considered to be his best works.²³

In November 1840 Korzeniowski finished the school in Zhytomyr. He was twenty years old. As Kiev University was closed, because it was being “quarantined” after the uncovering of the Konarski conspiracy, Apollo chose to go to St. Petersburg, where between 1841 and 1846 (and perhaps even till 1847) he studied at the tsarist St. Petersburg State University. He read Oriental Studies for a year and then spent five years at the Faculty of Law, which enjoyed a good reputation.²⁴ However, traces of Apollo’s presence on the banks of the Neva are very scarce. Tadeusz Bobrowski, who appears to have been well informed, wrote that Apollo returned from St. Petersburg “without having completed his university course” – a view which is not only biased, but also hardly credible.²⁵ The six years spent in the capital of the Empire must have influenced Apollo’s spiritual nature, which was being shaped at that time, as well as his views on the system of government and the state of Society, Russian political thought and the nature of the Empire, as well as the attitude of “Muscovy” towards the Poles. This overlapped with Apollo’s experience of Russian policy in the “Taken Lands” and his

²¹ Jeż (Miłkowski). *Od kolebki przez życie*, Vol. 1, p. 135.

²² Jan Staniewicz. *Wspomnienie o Zygmuncie Sierakowskim, naczelnym wodzu powstania styczniowego na Litwie i Żmudzi. Wyjątki z pamiętnika*. Kowno 1939, p. 3. [The first two lines of the English translation come from Adam Mickiewicz. *Forefathers. Part One and Two in One Volume*. Trans. Count Potocki of Montalk. Bookham, Surrey, The Right Review 1944, p. 39. The original version is much more colloquial – as it has been explained, it is, in fact, a parody of the most famous two lines of *Dziady Part II* spoken by the Chorus, here rendered in Russified Polish. Translator’s note.]

²³ Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 8–9; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, pp. 26–27; Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, p. 148.

²⁴ Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 5–6; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, pp. 22–23. Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, pp. 12, 14; Rafał Marcei Blüth. *Dwie rodziny kresowe*. “Ateneum” 1939, No. 1, p. 10.

²⁵ From Bobrowski’s “Memoirs”. [In:] *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 16; cf. Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia*, Vol. 1, p. 426.

home-bred hostility towards the autocracy, which he called the “Hosudarstwo”. The influence of his university circles can only have added to his aversion to the autocracy.

According to the Russian authorities, after the 1835 “reforms” and the closure of the Polish universities in Warsaw and Vilnius, the Russian universities – especially those in St. Petersburg and Moscow – were intended to fulfil a clearly defined “mission” targeting Polish youth. The Minister of Education, Uvarov, believed that for the Poles, university education was the best way to achieve “a desired conflation of the two hitherto conflicting elements: Russian and Polish” and he wrote with great conviction that “the sight of Russia’s might, her political and educational system, directly affects the minds of Polish youth, raised in an atmosphere of hatred and contempt for Russia, and subtly evokes a kind of respect in them for Russia’s primacy among Slav nations – and this feeling should gradually, without force, fundamentally alter all the ideas of these people”.²⁶ Many of the dignitaries who were responsible for education stressed this message to Polish students: “I expect that you, gentlemen, will now forever remain Russian, that from now on the Neman River will no longer constitute a border between us, and that the same great Russia and the same Russians will be there by the Vistula and by the Neva alike. We have the same common glorious homeland; let us work together, then, for her splendour and happiness and for our Monarch”.²⁷

Towards the end of the 1830s approximately 90–100 Poles studied at St. Petersburg University, while in 1847 the number was 277 out of a total of 700 students.²⁸ All Polish students were placed in the “tender” care of the curator and the university authorities, which in practice meant police-style supervision. This was made all the easier by the fact that the students constituted a conspicuous group: they wore dark-green uniforms with blue collars and cuffs, yellow buttons emblazoned with the crest of the Empire, a hat and a sword. “Almost military subordination” was expected of them, but classes were not very absorbing, the standard of teaching being rather average. In Polish memoirs describing the university it is the Polish professors that stand out: Romuald Hube, professor of Polish Law, Ignacy Iwanowski, professor of International Law, Cyprian Zaborowski, professor of Civil and Trade Law – and, a little later, Antoni Czajkowski, professor of Polish Law, who encouraged Polish students to study Polish literature and history.²⁹ We can learn from reliable memoirs that up to 1848 the so-called “Lithuanians” – Poles hailing from the former Grand Duchy of Lithuania – distinguished themselves among Polish students by their attitude and their integrity. They got on best with the

²⁶ Kucharzewski. *Epoka paskiewiczowska*, p. 248.

²⁷ Franciszek Nowiński. *Polacy na Uniwersytecie Petersburskim w latach 1832–1884*. Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Zakładu Narodowego im. Ossolińskich, Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Umiejętności, 1986, pp. 24–25.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 41–45.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 56; Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia*, Vol. 1, pp. 376–383; Włodzimierz Spasowicz. *Dzieje literatury polskiej*. Kraków: Gebethner i Wolff, 1891, Foreword, p. VI. See Joachim Bartoszewicz. *Listy do Rodziców*. “Przewodnik Naukowy i Literacki”, R. XXIX, 1901, pp. 91–93, 163–165; Zygmunt Szczesny Feliński. *Pamiętniki*. Ed. Eligiusz Kozłowski. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo PAX, 1986, p. 163.

Polish students from Ruthenia, who were also sons of noblemen. They shared their Catholicism, their religious festivals and ceremonies and their self-teaching circles and were attracted to the cultural and social life of the capital (i.e. the theatres).³⁰ The very fact that Polish young men coming from all parts of the Russian partition of Poland met there gave them a great opportunity to exchange information, experiences and opinions from their family homes, their still vivid memories of the Philomaths from Vilnius, the November Uprising and in particular the recent tragic fate of the conspirators led by Szymon Konarski, as well as the subsequent repressions that afflicted many Polish families in Lithuania and Ruthenia.³¹ This is how a Warsaw conspirator, a former student of St. Petersburg University, defended himself during an interrogation: “The university and my acquaintances there have been my undoing. All that singing, all those books, stories and anecdotes told by former, and later, newly-arrived fellow students. I, merely a silent listener to all this, was all the more susceptible to the poison”. And the result, he added, was that “I swam in the filth of stupid patriotism”.³² “Depredatory books” were the source of this misfortune. Zygmunt Feliński, who studied in Moscow during the same period, stressed that Polish young people “devoted almost all their time to reading works on national history and works of literature”, and so “every one of us [...] left the university desks well acquainted and sometimes thoroughly acquainted with all things Polish, to which much was contributed by a secret library assembled thanks to money collections, and comprising the greatest works concerning the Polish question that had been published at home or abroad”.³³

The main “staging post” of this literature was the Kingdom of Poland, from where contemporary underground publications (later called “bibuła” in Polish, meaning “blotting paper”) travelled on to Lithuania and Ruthenia and then to St. Petersburg. This contraband was smuggled in the luggage of students coming back from their holidays; secret reprints from the Ossolineum in Lviv (a highly esteemed institution of Polish science and culture with a famous library) were smuggled to Volhynia and Podolia. Russian booksellers in St. Petersburg, Moscow and Kiev also participated in this shipment of forbidden books, “which were worth their weight in gold”. They used the following trick: they would bind forbidden material with the covers of books that did not arouse the censors’ suspicions. Thus Mickiewicz reached St. Petersburg disguised as Schiller and *La Russie et les Russes* (Paris 1847, Vols. 1–3) – written by the “State criminal” Turgenev – masqueraded as an anti-Polish memoir by Nikolai

³⁰ Jakub Gieysztor. *Pamiętniki z lat 1857–1865*. Vilnius: Księgarnia Stowarzyszenia Nauczycielstwa Polskiego, 1913, Vol. 1, p. 19; Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia*, Vol. 1, pp. 367, 374.

³¹ Nowiński. *Polacy na Uniwersytecie Petersburskim*, pp. 47, 100; Feliński. *Pamiętniki*, pp. 149–150; Gieysztor. *Pamiętniki*, Vol. 1, p. 21.

³² *Rewolucyjna konspiracja w Królestwie Polskim w latach 1840–1845: Edward Dembowski*. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1981, p. 294; W. Dawid’s testimony. See Śliwowska. *Sprawa pietraszewców*, pp. 64–65.

³³ Feliński. *Pamiętniki*, p. 148; see also p. 155.

Karamzin.³⁴ A list of the titles of forbidden books mentioned in over a dozen memoirs and accounts of Russian police investigations indicates that between 1838 and 1848 at least fifty publications covering a wide ideological spectrum definitely circulated among Polish students: they ranged from Mickiewicz's works to the manifestos of the Polish Democratic Society (*Towarzystwo Demokratyczne Polskie*).³⁵ And yet this list is by no means complete – it merely illustrates the phenomenon and does not in any way constitute an exhaustive catalogue of forbidden books. It may be added here that these same forbidden books shaped the minds of subsequent generations of Polish youth at Russian universities during the “Post-Sebastopol Thaw” (following the Crimean War, 1853–56), and later during the period of the anti-Polish backlash after the January Uprising (1863–64), which lasted until 1905.³⁶ Miłkowski, a friend of Apollo's who attended the same Nemirov secondary school (and who in 1848 escaped from the Ukraine to Galicia and Hungary), recalled that in the school in Odessa “the smallest scrap of paper that fell into our hands was read and commented on, and was used for building whole systems and doctrines”. He particularly emphasised the influence of Henryk Kamieński's treatise entitled *O prawdach żywotnych narodu polskiego* (*Vital Truths of the Polish Nation*, Brussels 1844).³⁷ In St. Petersburg, as we learn from Włodzimierz Spasowicz, a particularly influential role was played by literary and political works written by the authors belonging to the “Great Emigration”, especially “Mickiewicz's *Paris Lectures*, Zygmunt Krasiński's poetry and the whole rich literature of Polish Romanticism”, which “served as nourishment for the generations that were growing up”.³⁸ Reprints passed from hand to hand and had a readership that was difficult to properly ascertain.

³⁴ Feliński. *Pamiętniki*, p. 155; Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia*, Vol. 1, p. 402; “Russkaya Starina” 1900, Vol. 103, p. 382. See Wiktoria Śliwowska. *Obieg wolnego słowa w zaborze rosyjskim w dobie międzypowstaniowej*. [In:] *Piśmiennictwo – systemy kontroli – obiegi alternatywne*. Ed. Janusz Kostecki, Alina Brodzka. Warszawa: Instytut Książki i Czytelnictwa, 1992, Vol. 2, pp. 58–86.

³⁵ In 1843 these were (among others): Karol Boromeusz Hoffman's *Rzut oka na stan polityczny Królestwa Polskiego pod panowaniem rosyjskim przez przeciąg lat piętnastu od 1815–1830*, or Jan Kiliński's *Pamiętniki*, Joachim Lelewel's *Dzieje Litwy i Rusi aż do Unii z Polską w Lublinie 1569 zawartej* (Paris 1839), Piotr Maleszewski's *Essai historique et politique sur la Pologne depuis son origine jusqu'en 1788* (Paris 1832), Maurycy Mochnacki's *Powstanie narodu polskiego w r. 1830 i 1831* (Paris 1834–1835), François Vincent Raspail's *Polska nad brzegiem Wisły i w emigracji* Paris 1840 with attached 1836 Manifesto of the Polish Democratic Society, Adam Mickiewicz's *Księgi narodu polskiego i pielgrzymstwa polskiego* (Paris 1833), *Dziady* Part III, *Pan Tadeusz*, Juliusz Słowacki's *Poezje* (Paris 1832), *Kordian* (1834), Wincenty Pol's *Pieśni Janusza* (Paris 1833) and *Pieśń o ziemi naszej* (Poznań 1843), Józef Wybicki's *Pamiętniki* (Poznań 1840), General Henryk Dembiński's account of the Lithuanian campaign in 1831, Feliks Wrotnowski's *Pamiętniki o powstaniu Litwy i Ziem Ruskich w roku 1831*, as well as the much discussed pamphlet *Czy Polacy mogą się wybić na niepodległość. Rewolucyjna konspiracja w Królestwie Polskim w latach 1840–1845*. Edward Dembowski. Wrocław 1981, pp. 211–212, 292–294.

³⁶ See e.g. Limanowski. *Pamiętniki*, p. 137.

³⁷ Jeż (Miłkowski). *Od kolebki przez życie*, Vol. 1, pp. 193–194.

³⁸ Spasowicz. *Dzieje literatury polskiej*, p. VI. See Gieysztor. *Pamiętniki*, Vol. 1, pp. 16–19. Cf. Feliński. *Pamiętniki*, p. 204 ff.

The more zealous readers produced handwritten copies of, say, Mickiewicz's *Dziady* – a work which was particularly sought after in Polish homes.

This was one of the ways in which the ideological stance of at least a section of the Polish student community in St. Petersburg and Moscow (the two largest centres of intellectual life in Russia at that time) was shaped. And this community was the future elite of Polish Society in the Russian partition. It would be difficult to imagine that Apollo Korzeniowski did not take part in this movement. Tadeusz Bobrowski insisted that in St. Petersburg Apollo “read a lot – mainly insane French literature”. This opinion, however, is rather superficial and is based only on Apollo's later translations.³⁹ Equally one-sided are the suppositions of the author of Korzeniowski's biography, who completely disregarded the political conditions which shaped Apollo's spiritual and ideological character,⁴⁰ for it is very likely that reading illegal political and patriotic texts was the most important factor in this process. In the case of Apollo, we can be sure of his familiarity with Mickiewicz's works published in Moscow and St. Petersburg before 1830,⁴¹ as well as with the *Księgi narodu polskiego i pielgrzymstwa polskiego* (The Books of the Polish Nation and of the Polish Pilgrimage), *Pan Tadeusz* and *Dziady Part III*, which were published in exile.⁴² Most likely it was also in St. Petersburg that he first read Krasiński. Furthermore, it must be remembered that Polish students had unlimited access to the Tsarist Public Library (of which the lion's share had belonged to the Załuski Library, which had been plundered in 1795) and whose collection after 1831 had been “enhanced” with some of the books confiscated from the libraries of the University of Warsaw, the University of Vilnius and the Warsaw Society of Friends of Learning. Those who knew what they wanted could there find literary and historical works which were inaccessible anywhere else, since, as one student wrote at the time, “several halls are filled with Polish books, everywhere the inscriptions read: Polish Literature, the Załuski Library, the Library of the Warsaw Society of Friends of Learning, the Puławska Library, the Library of Sapieha, Dąbrowski, Czartoryski and many others. [...] They give us great works, whatever we want”.⁴³

In St. Petersburg Korzeniowski had the opportunity to gain a better experience of what he must have known when he left his family home: the hostility towards Poland in official circles and in a large section of Russian Society. Less than ten years had elapsed since the November Uprising, when Poland had opposed Russia again, not

³⁹ Rolle. *In illo tempore...*, p. 31; From Bobrowski's ‘Memoirs’. [In:] *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, 16–17; cf. Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia*, Vol. 1, p. 426.

⁴⁰ Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, p. 14.

⁴¹ E.g. *Poezje* including *Ballady i romanse*, and *Dziady* Part II and IV (1823), *Oda do młodości* (1828), *Sonety* (1826 in Moscow), *Konrad Wallenrod* (1828 in Saint Petersburg).

⁴² In 1833 Pushkin already had the books and accused Mickiewicz of spreading hatred, referring to the poem *Petersburg* dedicated “to Muscovite friends”. Włodzimierz Spasowicz. *Pisma krytyczno-literackie*. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1981, p. 290.

⁴³ Bartoszewicz. *Listy do Rodziców*, pp. 165–166: a letter of 6 September 1838. Cf. Wincenty Dawid. *Ze wspomnień uniwersyteckich*. “Przegląd Literacki ‘Kraju’”, 1890, No. 39, p. 7.

only questioning her right to partition the territory of the Polish Commonwealth, but also undermining Russia's international position by blocking its access to Europe, to the Rhine and the Seine. In 1831, for the first time in the 19th century, anti-Polish literary works – alongside tsarist proclamations – became a factor which shaped the consciousness and political attitudes of broad sections of Russian Society. Just such a role was played by Alexander Pushkin's triptych, written out of concern for the future of Russia and in particular the possible loss of the Kingdom of Poland and the western governorates which would follow Poland's recovery of her independence. The triptych entered into a debate with western public opinion, which was favourably disposed towards the Poles. What is more, it expressed jubilation over the "taking of Warsaw", which was applauded in Russia because it corresponded perfectly with the atmosphere of hostility towards the Polish nation. Other writers immediately followed in Pushkin's footsteps and their anti-Polish works were included in the secondary-school syllabus, thus becoming well known to Polish students, too.⁴⁴ However, this was not the only way in which Russian chauvinism manifested itself: Poles were accused of breaching Slav solidarity, of ingratitude towards Russia, of "Wallenrodism" and of subservience to the West, while the occasional sympathetic voice of support for Poland was drowned out by "Great Russian" eulogists of the autocracy.⁴⁵ The official stance of the Russian State was easily recognisable in Nikolai Karamzin's *History of the Russian State* (1842–1844), which presented Polish-Russian relations as a perennial struggle in which the stake for the Russians was the survival of their country and the potential price to pay was the loss of Ruthenia. Turgenev, one of the most outstanding opponents of Nicholas I, wrote that Karamzin "fed the hatred of Poland that was present in Russia".⁴⁶ Apollo's studies in St. Petersburg took place during a period in which the ideology of the Slavophiles achieved its final form, propagating the struggle against the Poles, who were seen as "dissenters from the Slav fold". These were the sources of Korzeniowski's critical attitude towards the Russian State and Russian Society, which is so clearly visible in his *Poland and Muscovy*.

* * *

Apollo Korzeniowski's studies in St. Petersburg were not, as Bobrowski would have us believe, a waste of time – and, in any case, he did not return to the Ukraine

⁴⁴ Waław Lednicki. *Aleksander Puszkina. Studia*. Kraków: Krakowska Spółka Wydawnicza, 1929, pp. 36–161; W. Lednicki. *Puszkina 1837–1937*. Kraków: Kasa im. Mianowskiego, 1937, pp. 55–57; Spasowicz. *Pisma krytycznoliterackie*, p. 284 ff., *ibid.*, pp. 285–286. Spasowicz writes that prince Peter Viazemsky was disgusted by Pushkin's and Zhukovsky's poems. See Jan Kucharzewski. *Od białego do czerwonego caratu*, Vol. 1: *Epoka Mikołajowska*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1998, p. 153.

⁴⁵ See Jerzy Rózewicz. *Polsko-rosyjskie powiązania naukowe (1725–1918)*. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1984, p. 107 ff.

⁴⁶ Qtd. in Andrzej Nowak. "Oświecony" rosyjski imperializm i Polska (od Piotra I i Katarzyny II do Karamzina i Puszkina). [In:] *Polacy a Rosjanie. Poljaki i russkie*. Ed. Tadeusz Epsztein. Warszawa: Neriton, 2000, p. 78.

without having gained any knowledge. On coming home he could confront what he had learnt about the State, the ideology of “Autocracy, Orthodoxy and Nationality” and the condition of Society with the practice of Russian rule – as exemplified by Governor General Bubikov – and its influence on Polish and Russian society. A wave of State officials from the heart of Russia arrived in Ruthenia – which, according to one of the Russian officers, meant “an inundation of the governorates by the outcasts and dregs of Russian officialdom: mostly discharged and starving servicemen, who, like jackals, were constantly sniffing around for prey”.⁴⁷ Denunciation, spying and bribery became commonplace. In Polish homes no one doubted the truth of Mickiewicz’s words:

| | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Wszak to już mija wiek, | A whole century has passed |
| Jak z Moskwy w Polskę nasyłają | And all the rogues in Moscow |
| Samych łajdaków stek. ⁴⁸ | Are still being sent to Poland. |

Another Ukrainian “reality” must be superimposed on this image of Russian rule, namely the condition of the Polish nobility, of which Apollo was a member and which encompassed his personal life – and later, to a great extent, also his public activity.

The country was still shaken by the echoes of “the Galician Slaughter” (also known as “the Peasant Uprising of 1846”). After several months, however, everyone was excited about the revolutions in France, Germany and Austria, as well as the national movement in neighbouring Galicia. Hopes for a European war were growing and it was repeated in many mansions that “to make happiness come, one must reach out for it”.⁴⁹ Those who held similar views renewed their personal contacts and this is how the friendship between Apollo and Stefan Buszczyński was born. Korzeniowski expressed his feelings after the collapse of the hopes connected with the Spring of Nations in his poetical cycle *Czyśćcowe pieśni* (Purgatorial Songs).⁵⁰ A few years later, during the Crimean War (1853–1856), he belonged to a group which – given favourable international circumstances – was ready to fly the flag of an uprising against Russia. This relatively little-known episode, which nonetheless was very significant for Korzeniowski, will be presented later when I discuss his treatise entitled *Poland and Muscovy* in greater detail.

Managing leaseholds in Podolia did not hold any promising prospects for Apollo, since the lifestyle of the “landed gentry” was not his vocation. For nearly ten years Apollo strove to convince the wealthier Bobrowskis that he was worthy of the hand of the beautiful and intelligent Ewa (Ewelina), the sister of the diarist Tadeusz and the insurgent Stefan. Ewa reciprocated his love and they were married in 1856. On 3rd December 1857 Ewelina gave birth to their son Konrad. They were a perfectly matched

⁴⁷ N.J. Mamajew. *Rosjanin w Polsce w latach 1838–1842*. Warszawa 1909, p. 96.

⁴⁸ *Dziady* part III. [In:] Adam Mickiewicz. *Dziela*, Vol. III, p. 243. [English translation by Charles S. Kraszewski: Adam Mickiewicz. *Dziady* (Forefather’s Eve) Dresden Text. Libella Veritatis, 2000, p. 132. Translator’s note.]

⁴⁹ See Miłkowski. *Od kolebki przez życie*, Vol. I, pp. 243–247.

⁵⁰ Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, p. 15.

couple, bound by strong feelings for each other and by their shared beliefs on social and national issues. This is what distinguished them from Tadeusz Bobrowski – who, considering himself to be a “sober” realist, rejected the Korzeniowskis’ illusions and thought that an accommodation with tsarist Russia was a historic necessity.⁵¹

Czesław Miłosz, who also hailed from the “borderlands”, stressed with great discrimination that Apollo found it difficult to accept the prospect of living in a “doleful country” and considered him to be a solitary figure “amidst people who are only concerned with buying, selling and the idiotic diversions of snobbery and social rank”. Miłosz also called him a “rebel”: running counter to his noble circles, social relations and the political system – and this he gave vent to in his writing, which was mainly social and political journalism dressed up as drama and which, according to Apollo, dealt with the most important national duties of his generation.⁵² Korzeniowski belonged to a group of Polish members of the intelligentsia in the Ukraine who shared a noble background and an inclination to write: Leonard Sowiński, Aleksander Groza, Aleksander Weryha Darowski, Zenon Fisz (Tadeusz Padalica) and Antoni Pietkiewicz. They all rejected the social conservatism and political opportunism that characterised the majority of Polish nobles (the *szlachta*), who deemed themselves to be the quintessence of Polishness.⁵³

In the summer of 1859 Korzeniowski made a very revealing and moving confession in a letter to Karol Szajnocha: “My story is simply the ordinary fate of the local people, who have not ceased to be human. I have drawn everything – life, thoughts and feelings – from the treasures of my hearth and home. I *had to* educate myself at St. Petersburg University and I thank God I did so, because there I came to the conclusion that the thatched roof of my home would forever be my temple and the place where I would end my days. I *must* stay within these three governorates, as it is impossible for me to go even to Odessa or Warsaw. I *must* be an old-style nobleman and not merely a heraldic one, because I cannot possibly part with my documents to present them before other people’s eyes. I *must* write, because – for the time being – there is nothing else that I can do. I *must* shut myself off, as hermetically as possible, within the small circle of people who think in the same way as I do, as the typical varied community here does not suit my thought and rank. I *have had to* stay in the countryside so far, since only here have I been able to find dispersed, life-giving forces. I *have had to* settle in Zhytomir and associate myself with the Publishing House, as this is the first undertaking with a higher purpose here that has managed to raise funds of any sort. So much so that I have also

⁵¹ Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 6–12; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, pp. 23–32; R.M. Blüth. *Dwie rodziny kresowe*. “Ateneum” 1939, No. 1, pp. 9–12, 15–17, 21–22. I am using the name “Ewelina”, because this is how she signed herself.

⁵² Miłosz. “Apollo N. Korzeniowski: Joseph Conrad’s Father”, pp. 124–125; cf. Miłosz. “Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski”, pp. 63–68; Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, p. 8 ff.; cf. Z. Najder. *Życie Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 26 ff.; Najder. *Joseph Conrad’s parents*, p. 20 f.; cf. Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*, p. 26 ff.; Najder. “Introduction”. [In:] *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. XIV; cf. Najder’s introduction to *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego...*, Vol. 1, p. 21.

⁵³ See Najder. *Joseph Conrad’s parents*, p. 25 ff.; cf. Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*, p. 32 ff.

put some of my own money into it, together with all my work. I want to enliven it with my thought and I will, so help me God! [...] it is only my duty, and nothing but my duty, that I am fulfilling” – as long as “my energy is not exhausted in this terrible battle with my own people and with outsiders”. And he added: “I have a wife who shares her whole life with me. [...] I have a child who is a few months old – a son, who is called Konrad. [...] My child is my hope for the future, my hope that I leave behind a heart which straight away will beat the way my own heart beats only after prolonged and tormented anguish and will be what I used to dream I would become”.⁵⁴

* * *

In 1859 the Korzeniowskis settled in Zhytomyr: Apollo abandoned his leaseholds and became an intellectual – a man of letters who earned his living as a correspondent for periodicals in Warsaw and St. Petersburg. The Post-Sebastopol Thaw seemed to be heralding a new era in the *Kresy* (Borderlands). Together with Kraszewski and others, Korzeniowski set up a publishing company and was planning to establish a periodical for farmers.⁵⁵ However, he quickly realised that he would not be able to surmount the barriers raised by the Russian authorities, while attempts to activate the Polish gentry in Volhynia brought meagre results, as this group was accustomed to exploiting the “*krepostny*” (peasants who were legally tied to the land) and its members were sceptical about broadening their economic activities.⁵⁶ Korzeniowski was fettered by the double straitjacket of political relations and the attitude of the Polish *szlachta*. The attempts made by Poles in Ruthenia to regain wider possibilities of developing their national culture, to restore the Polish educational system and to create farm and credit associations which would promote social progress brought no results. On the one hand, there was the inertia of the Polish nobility as a whole – and, on the other hand, the opposition of the Russian authorities, who answered all Polish petitions with administrative sanctions. All this was inevitably leading to an open confrontation between the Poles and Russia. Apollo did not feel any “fear and resignation” towards Russia and rejected all “passive self-preservation” – two types of attitude which were visible even within his own family.⁵⁷ It is therefore no wonder that from the end of 1860 his hopes turned to Warsaw – where, he believed, the development of the national movement opened up new possibilities for public initiatives.

⁵⁴ *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, Vol. II, pp. 174–176, a letter of August 1858 r. See also pp. 178, 183–186, 196–197, 201, 217–218, 247–251.

⁵⁵ Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 13–16; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, pp. 34–36.

⁵⁶ *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, Vol. II, p. 249: Apollo to Szajnocha, 23 August/4 September 1860, *ibid.*, p. 276: A. Pietkiewicz to Szajnocha 21 January/2 February 1861. See also pp. 259–262, 273–277. Cf. Józef Ignacy Kraszewski, Teofil Lenartowicz. *Korespondencja*. Wyd. Wincenty Danek. Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1963, pp. 27–28.

⁵⁷ Najder. *Joseph Conrad and Tadeusz Bobrowski*. [In:] *Conrad in Perspective. Essays on Art and Fidelity*, pp. 51–52; cf. Najder. *Conrad i Tadeusz Bobrowski*. [In:] Z. Najder. *Sztuka i wierność. Szkice o twórczości Josepha Conrada*, pp. 57–58.

Thus, from being a “rebel”, revolting against the world that surrounded him, Korzeniowski turned into one of the “underground people”, whose aim was to overthrow “the government of invaders” and to rebuild an independent Poland as a democratic country. Within a few months, between the autumn of 1860 and April 1861, from an observer inspired by patriotic demonstrations he turned into an activist involved in a movement fighting for the liberation of Polish land from the might of Russia. In May 1861 he moved from Zhytomyr to Warsaw, where “all [his] best feelings attracted him”.⁵⁸ He arrived with a bold plan to establish a social and literary periodical – the Polish equivalent of the French *Revue des Deux-Mondes* – which would serve as a platform for the national movement. Between June and October 1861 he occupied himself with assembling a team of co-workers and enlisting correspondents from Ruthenia and Galicia; he also made political contacts, e.g. with Andrzej Zamoyski, whom he met through Karol Majewski and who made him certain promises.⁵⁹

His wife Ewelina remained in Volhynia with little Konrad, who assured his father in a letter written in May 1861: “I’m fine here, I run around the garden – but I don’t like it much when the mosquitos bite”.⁶⁰ But this idyll was very superficial. The movement of patriotic-cum-religious demonstrations in Zhytomyr absorbed Ewelina, who was one of the most active propagators of national mourning – which was also worn by little Konrad. The Russian police had their eyes on her; they were also interested in Apollo, as shortly before his departure for Warsaw he had invited the Volhynia nobility to a conference organised at his home. There, following the example of Podolia, a decision was made to send the Tsar a petition requesting that he incorporate the western governorates into the Kingdom of Poland.⁶¹ Ewelina was followed, her correspondence with Apollo was intercepted and inspected and their servants were interrogated. As an experienced conspirator, Ewelina reassured her husband: “You can put your mind at rest: the house is prepared for anything. Kind people have helped me to clear everything away, without my having to go home”. And she warned Apollo: “I beg you to be careful with the post”; she also asked him not to come back to Zhytomyr, because “who knows if after your return you might not find yourself somewhere else?” In an attempt to play down

⁵⁸ *Korespondencja Karola Szajnochy*, Vol. II, p. 302. See Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, pp. 133–135.

⁵⁹ *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 46–47, 57–58; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego...*, Vol. 1, pp. 114, 116, 131–132; Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, pp. 99–101; Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 15–16, 17–18; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, pp. 36, 39. Walentyna Rudzka. *Karol Majewski w latach 1859–1864*. Warszawa: Towarzystwo Naukowe Warszawskie, 1937, pp. 61–63, 73. Przyborowski. *Historia dwóch lat*, Vol. III, p. 267.

⁶⁰ Joseph Conrad to Apollo Korzeniowski. Terechowa, 23 May 1861. Trans. Halina Carroll-Najder. [In:] *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, Vol. I: 1861–1897. Ed. Frederick R. Karl and Laurence Davies. 2nd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 3; cf. Conrad. *Listy*, p. 19; Najder. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 2, p. 11.

⁶¹ See Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia*, Vol. 2, pp. 447–451; Zygmunt Staroropiński, Konstanty Borowski. *Miedzy Kamieńcem a Archangielskiem. Dwa pamiętniki powstańców z 1863 roku*. Ed. Stefan Kieniewicz. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1986, pp. 148–149.

rumours, she herself spread the false news that Apollo had left for St. Petersburg.⁶² There was now no doubt at all that Apollo's return to Volhynia was impossible... In August, Ewelina and Konrad were taken to Warsaw by Tadeusz Bobrowski.⁶³ Ewa agreed to every one of Apollo's decisions without hesitation – they had the same goals and ideals. "I am prepared to renounce all the joys of life so as not to be defiled by *that* which throughout your life you have tried to shun and which until now you have not touched", she assured him.⁶⁴ She did not hide her belief that Poland would regain her independence. Remembering the impression that the unification of Italy had made on her a year earlier, she wrote: "I feel that it will 'come true'... Just as once the noble call 'Unita Italia' fired my heart with elation and drew all my sympathy, so today my heart trembles a thousand times more powerfully, my soul yearns for that 'Young Poland' of our dreams which you will create, rouse to life and lead into the future... Oh God, give your blessing to good will, to the earnest desire of the attainment of Your holy ends! Please send the grace of Your best inspiration, instil Your pure Truth into our hearts and consciences, fortify our resolve and do not abandon us in our hard work!"⁶⁵

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Ewa's concern and the visible increase in the state of alertness of the Russian police were not unfounded. While in Warsaw, Apollo devoted himself not only to the project of establishing a new periodical, but also became completely absorbed by the Movement, whose main goal was the active struggle for an independent and democratic "Young Poland". Perhaps thanks to the help of Stefan Bobrowski, who at that time was a main-spring of clandestine activity, the man of letters from Zhytomyr very easily became a member of the leading circles of the Warsaw underground movement and gained some influence on the much younger conspirators. Between June and October 1861 he was one of the main organisers of the religious-cum-patriotic demonstrations which, following Warsaw's example, spread to the whole Kingdom of Poland, Lithuania and Ruthenia. A particular political meaning was given to the celebrations of the anniversary of the Polish-Lithuanian Union organised on 12th August in Warsaw, Vilnius and Kaunas, on both sides of the Neman, largely thanks to Korzeniowski: their goal was to ostentatiously demonstrate the unity of the Polish, Lithuanian and Ruthenian lands in the fight for national rights. This was also the aim of the celebrations of the anniversary of the

⁶² *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 37–55; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, pp. 100–128; Ewelina's letters to Apollo, May–August 1861.

⁶³ Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, p. 110. See *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 57–58; cf. Ewelina to Antoni Pietkiewicz, Zhytomyr 27 August 1861. [In:] *Ruch społeczno-polityczny na Ukrainie w 1856–1862 r.*, pp. 139–140. Najder. *Joseph Conrad's parents*, p. 29; cf. Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*, p. 37; Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, p. 18; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, p. 40 – incorrect information about Ewelina and Konrad's arrival in Warsaw in October 1861.

⁶⁴ *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 44; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 111: 28 May/9 June 1861.

⁶⁵ *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 53; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, pp. 124–125: 5/17 July 1861.

Union of Horodło, which were held on 10th October 1861 on the banks of the River Bug and which attracted over 15 000 people from the Kingdom of Poland and Volhynia.⁶⁶

At the same time, Korzeniowski played a “political game” between the two wings of the pro-independence movement by mobilising the “Reds”, whose goal was to fight for the independence of Poland, against the “Whites”, who supported Andrzej Zamoyski and his programme of political concessions that were even more far-reaching than those once proposed by Aleksander Wielopolski in the name of accommodation with Russia. The public arena for this confrontation were the local government elections in the Kingdom of Poland, especially the Municipal Council election in Warsaw in September 1861.⁶⁷ Two trends clashed in the “red” camp: the moderates from the Academy of Medicine and Surgery accepted the elections, while the conspirators from the School of Fine Arts led those who demanded an unconditional boycott. Korzeniowski, associated mainly with the School of Fine Arts, was in a difficult position: in his view, a simple boycott would have been futile, but, on the other hand, straightforward acceptance would have meant missing an opportunity to voice political demands which were to indicate the direction of further action for the whole pro-independence camp. Korzeniowski took advantage of the campaign to openly remind everyone of the principles of the pro-independence programme: the unification of Polish lands within the pre-partition borders. In a pamphlet published towards the end of August 1861 entitled *Co mamy z tym fantem robić, co go trzymamy w ręku?* (What are we to do with the problem that we have on our hands?), he rejected both passive acceptance of the local government and an unconditional boycott. The election should be “worthy of the Polish nation”, he believed, and so it was expedient to “elect people with unquestionable civil courage for Councillors; to make sure of their aspirations by giving them a mandate to demand the immortal and inalienable national rights” belonging to the Kingdom of Poland, Lithuania and Ruthenia in equal measure. “Yet,” he urged “the People of Poland,” “do remain in mourning; ask for God’s mercy in church; save every penny and amass funds, so that you have them ready when the time comes. Without a mandate from the People – a mandate based solely on the political aspect of Poland’s existence – the People cannot and should not take part in the election. Otherwise they will be lulled to sleep – they will be deluded, they will be placed into a grave as a living corpse, disgraced by having abandoned the bloodied Lithuanians and the persecuted Ruthenians!”⁶⁸ His was the sternest voice, whose

⁶⁶ Franciszka Ramotowska. *Narodziny tajemnego państwa polskiego 1859–1862*. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1990, pp. 117–124.

⁶⁷ Stefan Kieniewicz. *Miedzy ugoda a rewolucją. (Andrzej Zamoyski w latach 1861–62)*. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1962, pp. 169, 180–182; Ramotowska. *Narodziny tajemnego państwa polskiego*, p. 102 ff.

⁶⁸ *Co mamy z tym fantem robić, co go trzymamy w ręku?*, a lithographic appeal with the deliberately misleading inscription: “Paris 26 August 1861”, pp. 1–13, original spelling preserved. For comment see Kieniewicz. *Miedzy ugoda a rewolucją*, p. 180; S. Kieniewicz. *Powstanie styczniowe*, Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1972, pp. 192–193; Ramotowska. *Narodziny tajemnego państwa polskiego*, p. 103 ff.

political message and agitational power emanated from numerous leaflets distributed throughout Warsaw. Korzeniowski's concept, sometimes after heated debates among the leaders of both wings of the "Reds", became the basis of a tactical agreement: the idea of a boycott was rejected and it was decided that the electorate and the candidates for Councillors would be given a so-called "Electorate's Mandate" containing new political demands which had been formulated by Korzeniowski: "The Kingdom of Poland and its capital Warsaw," he wrote, "claiming the rights and freedoms which have been torn away from them, demand these same rights and freedoms for the provinces which were attached to them for centuries, i.e. for the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and for Ruthenia". A refusal to act on this demand, he added, would be regarded as "a betrayal of the sacred interests of the Fatherland". This formulation of the local government elections with a clearly defined programme for the unification of Polish lands within the 1772 borders was an act which had a nationwide political resonance.⁶⁹ On the day of the elections, 23rd September 1861, in the presence of several thousand citizen demonstrators in Warsaw, the "mandate" was entrusted to Zamoyski. Korzeniowski had chosen the right moment to put pressure on the "Whites", as Zamoyski's associates had already been thinking of formulating new political conditions vis-à-vis St. Petersburg in the summer of 1861. Now the "Whites" were being pushed towards the demand for the formation of an electable national representation. Thus Apollo was correct in predicting that "Count Zamoyski would never overtake the movement, but would rather follow it".⁷⁰

The next three weeks brought new developments which intensified the struggle of Polish Society against tsarism. In response to the truly royal funeral of archbishop Antoni Fijałkowski and the great demonstration in Horodło, the Russian authorities declared a state of martial law in the Kingdom of Poland on 14th October, warning that they would act "without any leniency". When, despite this, on 15th October – the anniversary of Kościuszko's death – previously announced patriotic services took place in the cathedral and at several other venues, the Russian army entered the churches. Around 1500 men were arrested and taken to the Warsaw Citadel. The clergy protested against this profanation by closing all the churches in Warsaw. This escalation of Russian repression precipitated the consolidation of the "Whites", who formed the National Delegation (*Delegacja Narodowa*). The need for a similar consolidation within the organisation of the "Reds" had already been made evident during the election campaign and after the introduction of martial law this became indispensable for any organisation that wished to have any real influence on those members of Polish Society who supported independence. Following Apollo's initiative, on 17th October 1861 the Movement Committee (*Komitet Ruchu* – also known as *Komitet Miejski* / the Municipal Committee)

⁶⁹ Kieniewicz. *Miedzy ugoda a rewolucja*, pp. 187–188; Kieniewicz. *Powstanie styczniowe*, p. 196. Walery Przyborowski. *Historia dwóch lat 1861–1862*. Kraków 1894, Vol. III, pp. 291–294. The text: Agaton Giller. *Historia powstania narodu polskiego w 1861–1864 r.* Paris 1868, Vol. II, pp. 113–116.

⁷⁰ Kieniewicz. *Miedzy ugoda a rewolucja*, p. 168, 179 ff., 189–194; Kieniewicz. *Powstanie styczniowe*, p. 197.

was set up in Warsaw. Its members were Apollo Korzeniowski, Ignacy Chmieleński and Witold Marczewski. It loosely associated various conspiratorial circles into one organisation working towards an uprising. Its instructions called for the gathering of funds and weapons and the spreading of patriotic propaganda in the countryside; it also declared that “the Poland of the gentry had irrevocably come to an end”, and that “the only banner of the faction was the idea of an insurrection” fighting for an independent Poland within the pre-partition borders. Their motto was “to act as if we were to rise up tomorrow and to rise up when we can be certain of victory; to do much and to speak little”. After a few months the organisation encompassed the territory of the Kingdom of Poland and the “Taken Lands”, as well as the Prussian and Austrian partitions.⁷¹

* * *

The formation of the Movement Committee was the apex of Korzeniowski's political and conspiratorial career – and, at the same time, its end. On the night of 20th October 1861 Apollo was arrested and thrown into the 10th Pavilion of the Warsaw Citadel, which – considering his barely concealed activities – had been almost a foregone conclusion since September 1861.⁷² A month later, Ewelina wrote in a letter to Antoni Pietkiewicz: “Apolek was taken on 20th October at half past midnight. We were both awake: he writing, I reading. Six minutes after the door-bell had rung he was gone from the house”.⁷³ The arrest had been well prepared. The same night Viceroy Karol Lambert sent a telegram

⁷¹ Ramotowska. *Narodziny tajemnego państwa polskiego*, pp. 174–175; Kieniewicz. *Powstanie styczniowe*, p. 206 ff.

⁷² Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, p. 112. The date of arrest: sometimes 9 October 1861 is given, which means old style date (O.S.). Gérard Jean-Aubry. *The Sea Dreamer: A Definitive Biography of Joseph Conrad*. Trans. Helen Sebba. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1957, p. 25 says that the arrest took place on the night of 1–2 November, mistakenly adding 12 days to the actual date according to the Polish calendar. NB: there are more mistakes in the chronology of Apollo's stay in Warsaw, his arrest and exile. Cf. G. Jean-Aubry. *Vie de Conrad*. Paris: Gallimard, 1947, p. 23. See e.g. *Ruch społeczno-polityczny na Ukrainie w 1863–1864 r.* Kyiv 1964, Vol. 2, p. 482. Even T. Bobrowski did not avoid errors, see Rolle. *In illo tempore...*, pp. 32–33, and after him Joseph Conrad to Edward Garnett. Pent Farm, 20 January 1900. [In:] *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, Vol. II, 1898–1902. Ed. Frederick R. Karl and Laurence Davies. 2nd edition. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 246; Joseph Conrad to Kazimierz Waliszewski. Pent Farm, 5 December 1903. Trans. Halina Carroll-Najder [and] Joseph Conrad to Aleksander M. Jasieński. Capri, Italy, 25 April 1905. Trans. H. Carroll-Najder. [In:] *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, Vol. III: 1903–1907. Ed. Frederick R. Karl and Laurence Davies. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988, pp. 88–89, 233–234; cf. J. Conrad. *Listy*. Ed. Z. Najder, H. Carroll-Najder. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1968, pp. 175, 222, 242. Cf. J. Conrad. *A Personal Record*. The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Joseph Conrad. Ed. Z. Najder and J.H. Stape. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 6–8; cf. J. Conrad. *Ze wspomnień*. [In:] *Pisma zbiorowe*, Vol. XV. Warszawa 1934, pp. 11–14. Apollo was confused with the writer Józef Korzeniowski, Wielopolski's supporter, by K. Dunin-Łasowicz explaining S. Duchńska's *Wspomnienia moje z roku 1863*. [In:] *Warszawa w pamiątkach powstania styczniowego*. Ed. Krzysztof Dunin-Łasowicz. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1963, pp. 474, 607–608.

⁷³ *Ruch społeczno-polityczny na Ukrainie w 1856–1862 r.*, p. 176; Conrad under Familial Eyes, 59; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 133.

to Tsar Alexander II saying: "Tonight many major agitators will be arrested. I will continue to work in this spirit".⁷⁴ The Police, "secret, public and androgynous", knew "the insubordinate" and some "actions and conversations". It is certain that Korzeniowski did not find himself behind bars because he had formed the Movement Committee, as this fact remained unknown. His arrest was not the result of a slip-up on the part of the organisation, but an operation intended to clear Warsaw of highly suspect elements in order to implement the new order of martial law more effectively.

Apollo found his imprisonment very difficult to endure. Admittedly, he would later comment sarcastically that "the authorities, seeing how overworked I was on the *Dwutygodnik*, bestowed upon me their tender and paternal care, first prescribing a seven months' period without writing, speaking or moving".⁷⁵ Yet the cell in the 10th Pavilion seriously impaired his health. He contracted rheumatism and scurvy, spending several weeks in the prison hospital. However, he had some books, wrote several poems and returned to translating his beloved Victor Hugo. The investigation did not break Apollo: his role in the Movement Committee remained unknown and he did not reveal anything that could have endangered anyone else.⁷⁶ Contrary to popular belief, such an attitude was not at all common at the time, as even members of the insurrectionary authorities were known to have "spilt the beans". For the first several months of Apollo's imprisonment, Ewelina, supported by her mother, Teofila Bobrowska, who had arrived from the Ukraine, tried unsuccessfully to visit her husband. "So far I have not been allowed to see him," she informed the Pietkiewicz family. "I go to the Citadel every day to enquire about his health and I am informed about it verbally; a few times a week I take food and linen for him, and every ten days I am allowed to submit a short note for him to the Citadel censorship; and a few days later I receive a reply through the same channel. Every morning I find a crowd of women by the Citadel gate; they are there for the same reason as myself. Sometimes we stand there the whole day, in the rain and the cold, waiting for a short note, for some news, and sometimes we wait in vain. Once, to get warm and to pass the time, we counted ourselves: we were several score more than two hundred, and the group grows larger each day. After a great deal of effort I was given permission to send Apolek a prayer-book and Robertson's text-book for learning English. *Nothing else* – but even this gave him some comfort". Of course, people consoled one another, saying that soon all the prisoners would be released.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ *Korespondencja namiestników Królestwa Polskiego z 1861 roku*. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1964, p. 322.

⁷⁵ *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 65–66; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 137.

⁷⁶ Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 18–19; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, p. 41; Najder. *Joseph Conrad's parents*, p. 30–31; cf. Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*, p. 38; Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, p. 113.

⁷⁷ *Ruch społeczno-polityczny na Ukrainie w 1856–1862 r.*, p. 176; 18 November 1861; *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 59; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 134.

After the first interrogations, Ewelina was allowed to see Apollo for a few minutes on Christmas Eve: she tried, as well as she could, to communicate to him various kinds of information so that he might have an idea of what the situation in the country was. At the time, instead of being released – as everyone had expected – prisoners were being exiled *en masse*: the clergy were being sent to Siberia, young men were being sent on foot to the Orenburg regiments. “The town is sad, black and silent,” Ewelina wrote, also informing her friends about Apollo’s recent illness and reassuring them that “he is in good spirits, calm and relaxed and during our short and rare meetings we can really joke about things. This is permitted”. She took little Konrad with her to the Citadel and was optimistic.⁷⁸

Yet matters were worse than Ewelina believed. For her own safety, no doubt, she had not been fully informed by Apollo about his interrogations. The Permanent Commission of Inquiry led by General Evgeni Roznov – whose career had begun in the war against the Poles in 1831, and who was a confirmed supporter of repression as a way of keeping the Kingdom of Poland Russian both in “name” and “nationality” – did not waste any time. Korzeniowski was questioned about other prisoners in the Citadel; military police from Volhynia provided information about him; papers from the editor’s folder of the *Dwutygodnik* were examined and particularly close attention was paid to Ewelina’s letters to Apollo. Roznov was regarded as a keen tracker of “Polish troublemaking”. His investigations clearly tended to exaggerate the guilt of the defendants and he personally examined all correspondence to and from prisoners. He owed his later career as director of the special office attached to the Viceroy of the Kingdom of Poland and as Civil Governor of Warsaw to his service in the Citadel.⁷⁹ We know from the documents and accounts that have survived that Apollo was interrogated at least four times: in November 1861 and in February and March 1862.⁸⁰ The charge against him was based on two denunciations by police agents from Warsaw and Zhytomyr and in particular on Ewelina’s letters, which had been confiscated during a search of their house. Ewelina, who was interrogated on 14th/26th March 1826, tried to deny the authorship of these letters – which, of course, failed to convince her interrogators. Apollo in turn was appalled by the fact that the charges against him were based on letters containing “the secrets of family life”, which conveyed “a feeling of love towards one’s country, a feeling which is universally respected and reputable and whose expression must not deserve condemnation” – all the more so as “in these letters

⁷⁸ *Ruch społeczno-polityczny na Ukrainie w 1856–1862 r.*, pp. 208–209; 7 January 1862; *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, 61; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, pp. 135–136.

⁷⁹ Łukasz Chimiak. *Gubernatorzy rosyjscy w Królestwie Polskim. Szkic do portretu zbiorowego*. Wrocław: Funna, 1999, pp. 33, 67, 115, 324. Paweł Ogrodnikow. *Dziennik więźnia 1862–1863*. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1986, p. 110. *Ruch społeczno-polityczny na Ukrainie w 1856–1862 r.*, pp. 255–256. A negative portrayal of Roznov can be found in Przyborowski. *Historia dwóch lat*, Vol. III pp. 408–409, 446.

⁸⁰ Jean-Aubry. *The Sea Dreamer*, p. 296 gives the dates: 27 November 1861 and 26 February, 13 and 14 March 1862 O.S. Cf. Jean-Aubry. *Vie de Conrad*, p. 282.

there is no hint of guilt or crime”.⁸¹ The Commission of Inquiry had its own view on this: the letters containing warnings about impending arrest testified to the fact that the couple had guilty consciences vis-à-vis the authorities; various allusions were quite clear to the investigators and Ewelina’s “insistent denial” or Apollo’s protestations about “privacy” could not have helped them.⁸²

Korzeniowski was accused of having had conspiratorial connections with the students of the “Gimnazjum Realne” (with Leon Frankowski in particular and with Stanisław Szachowski, a student of the School of Fine Arts, who, under Apollo’s leadership, had formed the “Mierosławski Reds” Committee, agitating among craftsmen and workers, supervising “troublemaking”, as the Russian authorities dubbed religious-cum-patriotic demonstrations). He was also accused of having authored a pamphlet entitled *Unia Litwy z Polską* (The Polish-Lithuanian Union)⁸³ – and, finally, of planning to escape from prison, which Ewelina had allegedly been helping him with.⁸⁴

Some of these charges were accurate. Apollo’s contacts with the conspiratorial youth of the “Gimnazjum Realne” and the School of Fine Arts were an indisputable fact. The students whose names were listed in the indictment were indeed two of the leaders of the Warsaw conspiracy; some of the others threatened with arrest had fled abroad.⁸⁵ Moreover, Russian police agents could not have overlooked Korzeniowski’s involvement in the organisation of the celebration of the anniversaries of the Union of Lublin and the Union of Horodło, and in particular his involvement in the September Municipal Council election. The accusation of having authored the “mandate of uniting Lithuania and Poland” was – in the words of the indictment – “the gravest in political terms”. Let us remember that for demanding that Ruthenia be united with the Kingdom of Poland (in their petitions to Alexander II) the Marshals of the *szlachta* from Podolia had been punished with exile into the remotest regions of Russia.

⁸¹ *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego...*, Vol. 1, pp. 40–41. Cf. Jean-Aubry. *The Sea Dreamer...*, p. 25; cf. Jean-Aubry. *Vie de Conrad*, p. 23.

⁸² The investigation records indicate that Apollo’s letters to Ewelina had not been confiscated: most likely they remained in Zhytomir with the Korzeniowskis’ friends who “cleared out” their house, or with their family in Novofastov. The letters were not used for the indictment, and they have not survived.

⁸³ What is meant here is most likely an appeal calling on the Poles to celebrate the anniversary of the Union in Horodło on 10 October 1861. Nikolaj Berg. *Zapiski o powstaniu polskim 1863 i 1864 roku i poprzedzającej powstanie epoce demonstracji od 1856 r.* Kraków 1899, Vol. 2, pp. 64–65 suggests Apollo’s authorship; Przyborowski. *Historia dwóch lat*, Vol. III, pp. 328–329 does not negate this; text: Giller. *Historia powstania narodu polskiego*, Vol. II, pp. 87–89.

⁸⁴ The charges: Jean-Aubry. *The Sea Dreamer*, pp. 25–26; cf. Jean-Aubry. *Vie de Conrad*, p. 23; *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 62; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 42; *Ruch społeczno-polityczny na Ukrainie w 1856–1862 r.*, p. 257. Cf. Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 18–20; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, pp. 41–42.

⁸⁵ Ramotowska. *Narodziny tajemnego państwa polskiego*, p. 175 ff.

Ironically, Korzeniowski was also accused of having had “connections with Count Wielopolski”, which he vehemently denied.⁸⁶ At first sight, it might seem that this accusation resulted from a misreading of a Russian document of the Commission of Inquiry, as the charge sounds rather absurd in light of what we know about Korzeniowski's activities. However, an official letter of 12th/24th April 1862 from General Lüders (who in the autumn of 1861 had become the Viceroy of the Kingdom of Poland) to the Governor-General of Kiev, Vasilchikov, informing him about the finalisation of the case against the Korzeniowskis and their sentence to a term of exile in Perm, enumerates Korzeniowski's offences thus: inciting secondary-school students and craftsmen to take part in street demonstrations, heading the mass gathering on 11th/23rd September 1861 organised with the aim of preventing the Municipal Council election, his detrimental influence on the people of Zhytomyr and the couple's participation in patriotic-cum-religious demonstrations. The letter also states that, despite their protestations, the couple could certainly be numbered among the most dedicated enemies of the Russian government – a fact which could best be illustrated by their letters, which were “full of ambiguous expressions”, as well as by confiscated documents of a conspiratorial nature. We can also read in the letter that Apollo “made close contacts with Count Wielopolski, at whose residence he often spent the night”.⁸⁷ This, of course, was complete nonsense, as the close associate who Wielopolski had been in contact with was *Józef* Korzeniowski, a former professor in Krzemieniec and of Kiev University, who at that time, on the count's behalf, was occupied with the establishment of the Warsaw “Principal School” (Szkola Główna). What happened was that Russian police agents confused the two writers – that much is certain. It is also certain, however, that both Wielopolski and *Józef* Korzeniowski were spied on. The question therefore remains as to why the highest-ranking Russian dignitaries in the Kingdom of Poland listed this charge, without any hesitation, in Apollo's indictment. Using a well-known formula, we could ask: *cui bono*? Most likely the answer to this puzzle lies in the fact that Lüders also sent the letters containing all the information about the finalisation of the case against the Korzeniowskis to the Head of the Third Section of His Imperial Majesty's Own Chancellery, Vasily Dolgorukov, as well as to the Minister of the Interior, Pyotr Valuev – thus, in terms of the procedures of the time, to Alexander II himself. What did all this mean? Is it not perhaps an indication of a serious conflict between Wielopolski and the Russian generals, who not only demanded vigorous suppression of the Polish pro-independence movement but also wished to forestall the concessions – aiming to establish civil authority in the Kingdom of Poland – which the count had striven for? In the late summer and autumn of 1861 Wielopolski had opposed General Sukhozanet, who was pressing for martial law, and had infuriated Russian dignitaries by announcing his political programme. The Count's recall to

⁸⁶ Jean-Aubry. *The Sea Dreamer*, p. 25; cf. Jean-Aubry. *Vie de Conrad*, p. 23.

⁸⁷ *Ruch społeczno-polityczny na Ukrainie w 1856–1862 r.*, p. 257.

St. Petersburg, which bore all the hallmarks of a fall from the Tsar's favour, could have led to a scheme which – through various suggestions – was intended to discredit the count in the eyes of Alexander II. If Korzeniowski's indictment was indeed an element of this intrigue, then it must be said that it failed: just as Lüders's letter was being delivered, a decision was made in St. Petersburg to nominate Grand Duke Constantine as the new Viceroy of the Kingdom of Poland, with Wielopolski being appointed head of the Civil Administration.⁸⁸

The Commission of Inquiry ended its investigation concerning the Korzeniowskis on 23rd March/4th April 1862 and a month later, on 27th April/9th May, following a verdict that the charges against them – “of his activities and of his alien way of thinking” – had been proved, the court martial sentenced both Korzeniowskis to exile in Perm “under strict police supervision”.⁸⁹ The sentence was compatible with the contemporary practice of repressions against anyone considered to be an actual or potential “disturber of the peace”. In fact, Poles who were much less suspect than Apollo and Ewelina had been sent into exile – sometimes merely on the strength of an administrative decision.⁹⁰ The couple set off immediately with five-year-old Konrad, escorted by gendarmes, along the so-called “moskovskoye shosse” (Moscow highway), via Brest to the old Russian capital, known as the City of White Stones. Eventually, however, instead of going to Perm they were directed to Vologda – where, after a strenuous journey interrupted by serious illnesses of both Ewelina and Konrad, they arrived on 12th June 1862.⁹¹

⁸⁸ See Adam Mieczysław Skalkowski. *Aleksander Wielopolski w świetle archiwów rodzinnych (1861–1877)*. Poznań: Polskie Towarzystwo Przyjaciół Nauk, 1947, Vol. III, p. 84. Kieniewicz. *Powstanie styczniowe*, pp. 204, 229–234. Irena Koberdowa. *Wielki książę Konstanty w Warszawie 1862–1863*. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1962, pp. 46–52. Przyborowski. *Historia dwóch lat*, Vol. III, p. 408.

⁸⁹ Korzeniowski's investigation records and the authentic verdict – destroyed during the war – were seen by G. Jean-Aubry, who, however, provides only a very general summary of the documents: Jean-Aubry. *The Sea Dreamer*, pp. 25–26; cf. Jean-Aubry. *Vie de Conrad*, p. 23. What has survived is an excerpt from the register of records of the Permanent Commission of Inquiry published in *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 62–63; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, pp. 42–43. Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 19–20; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, pp. 42–43.

⁹⁰ See Limanowski. *Pamiętniki*, p. 286 ff. Bobrowski suggests that the Korzeniowskis were given a relatively mild sentence thanks to... Roznov, who supposedly took into account the fact that Korzeniowski used to be “a friend of my brother's, Stanisław, from the regiment of the Grodno hussars”. From Bobrowski's “Memoirs”. [In:] *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 63–64; cf. Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia*, Vol. 2, p. 457. Bobrowski's view on this was repeated by Jean-Aubry. *The Sea Dreamer*, p. 26; cf. Jean-Aubry. *Vie de Conrad*, p. 24.

⁹¹ From Bobrowski's “Memoirs”. [In:] *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 63–65; cf. Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia*, Vol. 2, pp. 457–459, manuscript at the Jagiellonian Library no 6577, Vol. 2, ch. 58: “Na godzinę przed wyruszeniem na zaprowadzenie. d. 8 maja 1862”. In *Poland and Muscovy* Apollo writes about setting out for the exile from the railway station in Warsaw's Praga, on a Warsaw–Saint Petersburg train. See *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 83–84; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, pp. 47–48. However, his account after having arrived

Vologda, Arkhangelsk, Perm, Vyatka and other cities north-east of Nizhny Novgorod up to the Ural Mountains and the White Sea were the region to which Poles from the Kingdom of Poland and the "Taken Lands" were exiled between 1861 and 1862. It is about them that Apollo wrote: "in the European part of Muscovy some provinces are called Siberian".⁹²

Thus began the Korzeniowskis' pitiable existence in the poor, muddy and cold town of Vologda. This is how Apollo described the place to his relatives, using the gloomy sarcasm which was characteristic of his mood at the time: "What is Vologda? [...] Vologda is a huge quagmire stretching over three versts, covered with parallel and intersecting lines of wooden foot-bridges, all rotten and shaky under one's feet. [...] The year here has two seasons: white winter and green winter. The white winter lasts nine and a half months, while the green winter lasts two and a half. Now it is the beginning of the green winter: it has been raining continually for twenty-one days and will do so till the end. [...] in fifteen days I have seen the following live creatures: 62 cows, 17 goats, 33 dogs and 29 coffins with human remains, which here count as people. [...] Vologda has been developed in a progressive, civilized fashion. I have come into contact with the two most important aspects of its civilization: the police and the thieves. I was addressed to the police as a parcel; the thieves prove their existence by their everyday activity. The question arises: who begot whom? Origin unknown".⁹³

While in exile, the Korzeniowskis became the focal point of a group of exiles and Polish settlers who had come there in several waves of deportations which had begun in 1831. They could send and receive letters to and from Poland and they received

in Vologda does not leave any doubt that the Korzeniowskis travelled through Mogilev Governorate and through Smolensk to Moscow. *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 65–66; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 137. S. Buszczyński writes about their travelling through Białystok: if this was true then railway transport to this city was probable, as this section was already operational. Stefan Buszczyński's account, *Malo znany poeta*. Kraków 1870, p. 38 arouses serious suspicion, especially his claim that "Korzeniowski's travel through Lithuania was a genuine triumph. In Białystok he was greeted by a crowd who had to be chased away by gendarmes and cossacks equipped with nagaykas. He was later transported through wilderness, out of fear that local Lithuanians could try to liberate him by using violence". NB: Buszczyński's revelations about "stilettists" threatening Apollo, and the plans of his liberation on his way to the exile were uncritically repeated by Miłosz. "Apollo N. Korzeniowski: Joseph Conrad's Father", pp. 134; cf. Miłosz. "Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski", pp. 74–75.

⁹² Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski, *Poland and Muscovy. Memoirs of xxx* Begun in 186....* [In:] *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 87; cf. *Ojczyzna* No. 31, 8 June 1864. See *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 86–87; *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 51.

⁹³ *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 66–67; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, pp. 138–139. Cf. also *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 67–71; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, pp. 140–143.

Russian, and perhaps even Polish newspapers.⁹⁴ “Exile,” Apollo wrote in *Poland and Muscovy*, “seemed to me as good a way to serve my country as any other”. And he comforted his family in Poland: “we do not regard exile as a punishment, but as a new way of serving our country. [...] So do not pity us and do not think of us as martyrs. We are servants who have been rewarded beyond our merit”.⁹⁵

Apollo considered the outbreak of the January Uprising in 1863 to have been premature.⁹⁶ In the spring of 1863 friends of Apollo Korzeniowski and Stefan Bobrowski had started off with *Złota Hramota*, a pamphlet announcing the enfranchisement of the peasants of Podolia, Volhynia and the Ukraine, calling on them to join the fight against tsardom. Unfortunately, they were greeted – and killed – with the scythes and axes of those whose rebellion eight years earlier had evoked such high hopes among noble idealists... These events, which took place in the village of Sołowiówka, were a very personal tragedy for Apollo. The Korzeniowskis were also strongly affected by the death of Stefan Bobrowski, one of the most prominent members of the Polish National Government (Rząd Narodowy), who died in a duel – which Joseph Conrad rightly called a political assassination⁹⁷ – after having been provoked by a political schemer. They continued to hear about the deaths of their friends: Franciszek Godlewski was killed at night in January; Leon Frankowski was captured armed and was hanged by the Russians. Apollo’s brother Robert was also killed in the Uprising and his father died after struggling for many years for the release of his other son, Hilary, who had been captured during the Uprising in 1864 and had been sent to Siberia, where he died a dozen years later.⁹⁸

In late spring or the summer of 1863, owing to their deteriorating health, the Korzeniowskis were transferred to another place of exile – the city of Chernihiv,

⁹⁴ The most complete description of Vologda: Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 20–23; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, pp. 43–46. Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, pp. 114–115. See Rolle. *In illo tempore...*, pp. 46–51; *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 65–72; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, pp. 137–145. Jean-Aubry. *The Sea Dreamer*, pp. 26–29; cf. Jean-Aubry. *Vie de Conrad*, pp. 24–26. *Wspomnienie* quoted in the literature of L. Pantelejev (Warszawa 1964, pp. 212–213) with remarks about a meeting with Apollo in Vologda is largely a retrospective projection of his attitude to the Polish issues from the beginning of the 20th century. Cf. the conditions and lifestyle in the Polish colony in Arkhangelsk: Limanowski. *Pamiętniki*, p. 334 ff.

⁹⁵ *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 83–84, 65–69; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, pp. 48, 137–141: Apollo to the Zagórskis, Vologda 27/15 June 1862.

⁹⁶ Buszczyński. *Mało znany poeta*, p. 39. Najder. *Joseph Conrad’s parents*, pp. 31–32; cf. Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*, p. 39; Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 22–23; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 46.

⁹⁷ Joseph Conrad to Edward Garnett. Pent Farm, 20 January 1900. [In:] *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, Vol. II: 1898–1902, p. 246; cf. Conrad. *Listy*, p. 175.

⁹⁸ *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 90; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 147. Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 22–23, 583–584; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, pp. 46–47, 457–458. Marian Dubiecki. *Na kresach i za kresami. Wspomnienia i szkice*. Kiev: Księgarnia Leona Idzikowskiego, 1914, Vol. 1, pp. 192–193.

on the banks of the Desna River, which was the administrative centre of the Chernihiv Oblast (province).⁹⁹ Here too their material conditions were extremely modest. Apollo complained that “the local Catholics, our self-styled countrymen, are not worth knowing: they are frightened of me”.¹⁰⁰ Among the exiles was Julian Sabiński, who had been involved in Szymon Konarski's conspiracy and who had served under his father during the defence of Zamość in 1831. Apollo wrote about him with great deference in *Cuique suum* in 1866.¹⁰¹

* * *

Korzeniowski anxiously followed the news from Poland while he was in exile in Vologda and Chernihiv. On the one hand, he observed the vicissitudes of the Uprising in the Kingdom of Poland and from May 1863 also in Lithuania and Ruthenia. On the other hand, he was deeply interested in the diplomatic interventions of other powerful states and the attitude of western societies towards Poland, as well as the reaction to the outbreak of the Uprising from Russia – both in official circles and in Russian Society. Towards the end of March 1863 Apollo wrote to his relatives in Lublin that they had just received “local newspapers [...] with dispatches of 7, 8, 9 and 10 March”, which indicated that he was aware of the first diplomatic steps undertaken by England and France towards St. Petersburg regarding the Polish Uprising. “Newspapers are like opium,” he added; “we know they will kill us and yet we go on reading them. Moreover, we live from one postal delivery to the next”.¹⁰²

⁹⁹ According to V. Panov's research (assuming that there has been no mistake in it) the permission for transfer was granted in January 1863, which served as the basis for the claim that this is when the Korzeniowskis moved to Chernihiv, and for recognising Chernihiv as the place from which Apollo sent his letter of 15/27 March 1863. However, the letter's content indicates that they are still in Vologda. See Najder, *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 22–23, 583–584; cf. Najder, *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, pp. 46, 457–458; *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 89–90; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, pp. 146–147. On 2/14 October 1862 Apollo wrote that “the governor gave permission to move us to Chernikhov, but it is impossible on account of our health and the state of local roads. *Tandem* thus [...] we stay put”. *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 70; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, pp. 142–143. In this case Bobrowski (From Bobrowski's “Memoirs”. [In:] *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 65; cf. Bobrowski, *Pamiętnik mojego życia*, Vol. 2, p. 458 and *Conrad's Polish Background. Letters to and from Polish Friends*. Ed. Zdzisław Najder. Trans. Halina Carroll. London: Oxford University Press, 1964, pp. 184–185; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 63), who visited the Korzeniowskis in Chernihiv was not wrong. Jean-Aubry, *The Sea Dreamer*, p. 28 writes about July 1863; cf. Jean-Aubry *Vie de Conrad*, p. 26.

¹⁰⁰ *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 109; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 179.

¹⁰¹ Buszczyński, *Mało znany poeta*, p. 39. *Stowarzyszenie Ludu Polskiego na Podolu, Wołyniu i w guberni kijowskiej. Szymon Konarski*. Ed. Magdalena Micińska. Warszawa: DiG, 2009, p. 116.

¹⁰² *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 90; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 147. See Jerzy Zdrada, *Sprawa polska w okresie powstania styczniowego*. [In:] *Powstanie styczniowe 1863–1864. Wrzenie. Bój. Europa. Wizje*. Ed. Sławomir Kalembska. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1990, p. 459 ff.

There was indeed little reason for optimism. Whereas in the summer of 1861 the bloody repression of peaceful demonstrations in Warsaw had evoked widespread sympathy in Russian Society (apart from court and government circles), as Russians had been expecting further constitutional and political changes, in 1862 reactionary tendencies began to make their appearance. These manifested themselves through the increasing reserve of Russian liberal circles towards the Polish pro-independence movement, the retreat of the “*Zapadniks*” (Westernisers), the growing influence of the Slavophiles and the xenophobia of city dwellers, which was reinforced by rumours that Poles had been responsible for recent fires in Moscow and other cities. The outbreak of the January Uprising revealed the scale of hostility towards Poles in Russia. The group of “Muscovite friends” greatly diminished, and even though it did not completely disappear, it ceased to have any meaningful influence on the attitude of Russian Society towards Poland.¹⁰³ Diplomatic intervention revived the “Polish question”, which had been skilfully “put to sleep” by Russian diplomats at the Congress of Paris in 1856. The threat of war posed by the western powers defending the Polish Uprising generated concern for the fate of the Empire: according to official circles and wide sections of Russian Society the prospect of rebuilding Poland within her historic borders meant partitioning Russia, no less. A unified front against Poland emerged and manifested itself in the form of hundreds of appeals to the Tsar. Russian chauvinism reared its ugly head and former liberals now followed the lead of Mikhail Katkov, who in the *Moskovskie Vedomosti* and the *Russky Vestnik* wrote about “the Polish intrigue”, treated the Poles as mortal enemies, set the tone and direction for anti-Polish propaganda and expressed the official position of the Russian State.¹⁰⁴ For the Slavophiles, the conflict between Russia and Europe, which had been provoked by the Uprising, was a clash of two civilisations: the western civilisation of the Latin world, embodied by the Catholic Church, with the Poles as the vanguard of the West, and the native Slav civilisation, whose values were represented by Russia and the Orthodox Church. Their main task was to keep Lithuania and Ruthenia and gain the peasantry’s support for tsardom. The man of Providence for these times turned out to be Mikhail Muravyov, known as the “wieszatiel” (Russified Polish for “hangman”), who demonstrated in Lithuania what a “practical policy” towards the Poles should be.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ See Kucharzewski. *Od białego do czerwonego caratu*, Vol. 4: *Wyzwalanie ludów*. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Naukowe PWN, 1999, pp. 7–16.

¹⁰⁴ Wiktoria Śliwowska. *Petersburg i społeczeństwo rosyjskie wobec kwestii polskiej w przededniu i w czasie powstania styczniowego*. [In:] *Powstanie styczniowe 1863–1864*, pp. 548–554; Zbigniew Barański. *Powstanie styczniowe w literaturze rosyjskiej*. [In:] *Dziedzictwo literackie powstania styczniowego*. Ed. Jan Zygmunt Jakubowski, Janina Kulczycka-Saloni, Stanisław Frybes. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, 1964, p. 515 ff.

¹⁰⁵ Henryk Głębocki. *Polska w myśli politycznej Jurija Samarina*. [In:] *Polacy a Rosjanie. Poljaki i ruskie*, pp. 140–142; Kucharzewski. *Od białego do czerwonego caratu*, Vol. 4, pp. 30–43, 56 ff.; Barański. *Powstanie styczniowe w literaturze rosyjskiej*, p. 517 ff.

Concerned about the pro-Polish stance of a large section of western public opinion, which castigated Russia's repressive policy in the Polish lands, St. Petersburg again reached for the negative stereotype of Poland – a well-trying anti-insurrection propaganda tool. Old tales were revived: of Poland as a country of noblemen's anarchy, religious intolerance, as well as political, economic and social backwardness. Western newspapers were reminded of and sent the opinion of Mikhail Karamzin – a historian, nationalist and apologist of autocracy – who approved of the partitions of Poland and insisted that "it is indispensable for our safety [...] that Poland does not exist in any form, and under any name." In 1862 his pamphlet of 1819 entitled *The Opinion of a Russian Citizen* was published in St. Petersburg: "We took Poland with the sword – that is our right [...]. Poland is the rightful property of Russia. There are no old rights of ownership in politics [...]. All or nothing. So far our State rule has been: not a span of land, neither to a foe, nor to a friend. [...] This is our State character. [...] the Rebuilding of Poland will mean the fall of Russia."¹⁰⁶

* * *

Korzeniowski knew all too well what Russian chauvinism meant – and not only for the Poles. Military uprisings and a new war between Poland and Russia had dug a trench of hatred between the two nations that was impossible to fill as long as the life-and-death struggle lasted. In Apollo's view, what was crucial at that moment was the attitude of Europe towards Poland and Russia, as well as the degree of western determination in supporting the Polish insurrection, i.e. an awareness that the struggle was fundamental for the future of the West. Ever since the Crimean War Apollo had been convinced that France and England did not realise the danger posed by Russia's foothold in Poland, i.e. in the heartland of Europe, just as they did not realise the danger posed by Russia's imperial policy in the East, namely in the Balkans. Before his arrest and especially during the insurrection Apollo had followed the polemics on the Polish issue among western commentators and Russian policy as recorded in the press and had become convinced that, essentially, not enough attention was being paid to the threat which emanated from the very nature of the Russian State and Russian Society – from Muscovy – and, as he used to write, from the "Hosudarstwo." The result was that the friends of Poland spoke too softly, while western supporters of Russia displayed calamitous naivety.

¹⁰⁶ Nowak. "Oświeceniowy" rosyjski imperializm i Polska, pp. 72–77. See Andrzej Walicki. *Zarys myśli rosyjskiej. Od oświecenia do renesansu religijno-filozoficznego*. Kraków: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Jagiellońskiego, 2005, p. 106 ff. *Zdanie obywatela rosyjskiego* by Karamzin was published for the first time by Nikolai Turgenev. *La Russie et les Russes*, Vol. 1, Paris 1847, pp. 355–368. In 1862 the text appeared in a volume of Karamzin's writings and correspondence published in St. Petersburg, and several times between 1869 and 1871 with a clear propagandist message. See Kucharzewski. *Od białego do czerwonego caratu*, Vol. 4, p. 181. In 1862 a Polish translation of the text was published: "Memoriał Karamzyna wystosowany w r. 1819 do Alexandra I-go względem jego zamiaru przywrócenia całego Królestwa Polskiego w dawnych jego granicach". *Tygodnik Poznański* No. 47, 21 November 1862, pp. 373–375.

Such was the ideological genesis of *Poland and Muscovy*, Apollo Korzeniowski's most important political treatise. Perhaps the first idea for *Poland and Muscovy* was born while Apollo was still in the Warsaw Citadel. He then had a lot of time to think about Russia and Russian policy towards Poland and Europe. However, in the prison cell he could only *reflect* on the subject, as putting his thoughts to paper was out of the question. This he undertook in Vologda and completed the task in Chernihiv, most likely in the late summer of 1863, at the height of the insurrection, but after the diplomatic intervention of western states against Russia had collapsed.

Korzeniowski took it upon himself to write *Poland and Muscovy* as if it had been a political commission – something which his biographers have hitherto failed to notice. Initially, the text was intended to be a response to the accusations of a French columnist, Émile de Girardin, who in 1863 had laid the following charge against the Poles: “during the Eastern (Crimean) War their movement did not help the West, and it developed rather late”. Apollo considered this accusation of idleness as proof of the writer's “fervent” defence of “the interests of Muscovites, which dishonoured the French nation”. In 1855, he insisted, “Poland had wanted to help with her blood and her arms, at the side of western countries – but the western countries did not want our help”.¹⁰⁷ Apollo presented the history of this offer in *Poland and Muscovy* and it will be discussed later in the present study. Here, however, it must be added that both Girardin's commentary and the charge of Polish passivity during the Crimean War have a broader background. From 1831 onwards a conflict between supporters of the Polish cause and journalists representing Russian interests had been taking place in the western press. The dispute intensified with each new international conflict and whenever the activity of the pro-independence movement in the Polish lands increased. This was also the case between 1861 and 1864 when, on the one hand, Polish émigrés endeavoured to inform western public opinion about the aims of the movement in the Russian partition through the press and numerous historical and political pamphlets (usually written to order), while, on the other hand, official Russian diplomats and the espionage services of the Third Section of His Imperial Majesty's Own Chancellery were engaged in a widespread anti-Polish propaganda offensive. The Polish side gained the support of such renowned periodicals as the *Revue des Deux Mondes* or the *Revue Européenne* and such dailies as *L'Opinion Nationale*, *La Patrie*, *Le Temps* and *Le Siècle*.¹⁰⁸ This allowed them to sway public opinion in France and England against Russia and helped to strengthen Polish political action in Paris and London. Inevitably, all these Polish efforts were countered by Russian diplomacy, which had the means and the funds to win over many a newspaper editor in Paris and London. For thirty years after 1832, count Jacob Tolstoy, an agent of the Third Section in Paris

¹⁰⁷ “Polska i Moskwa” in *Ojczyzna* No. 44, 23 June 1864.

¹⁰⁸ Władysław Czaratoryski. *Pamiętnik 1860–1864. Protokoły posiedzeń Biura Hotelu Lambert cz. I i II. Entrevues politiques*. Ed. Henryk Wereszycki. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1960, pp. 27–28, 30–35, 39, 124, 194, 208–211, 286, 299, 301. The budget of the office of Hôtel Lambert from 1 August 1862 to 31 May 1863 provided 3000 francs per month for editors' fees and 1800 francs per month for subsidies and purchase of newspapers.

of many years' standing, played a special role here, systematically subsidising Parisian daily newspapers: *La Presse*, *L'Assemblée Nationale* and *Le Constitutionnel* as well as *L'Indépendance Belge* and *Le Nord* in Brussels, among others. He was particularly active and productive between 1861 and 1864, when he introduced Julian Bałaszewicz as a special agent hiding behind the fake identity of count Albert Potocki. His achievements were, among others, provocations carried out against Polish organisations and the Russian pro-Western writer Alexander Herzen.¹⁰⁹

One of the greatest beneficiaries of co-operation with the agent of the Third Section was Émile de Girardin,¹¹⁰ the abovementioned writer and political columnist who opposed the politics of Napoleon III (becoming one of the republican leaders after his fall) and who was editor-in-chief of the influential Parisian *La Presse*. This newspaper belonged to that part of the French press which between 1863 and 1864 represented the Russian point of view. The Polish insurrectionary press condemned such articles: "those hirelings like *Le Nord* or *La Presse* sing like trained starlings," it wrote, and Girardin "has become a gutter for Muscovite filth".¹¹¹ Girardin himself had spoken out against the Poles during the Crimean War and – with regard to the 1863 insurrection – his hostile position was plain to see both in *La Presse* and in several long political pamphlets, including the more well-known *Paix et liberté* and *L'apaisement de la Pologne*. In the summer of 1863 the insurrection newspaper *Niepodległość* (Independence) quoted Girardin's view: "Public reason has matured too much to be seduced by some war-time songs of a few newsagents, striving at all cost to turn one half of the world against the other. Public reason holds a position that is appropriate for its time and that is why it does not want war. Public reason has become national-economic reason. Every war is a waste of people and money. We know how a war begins, but we never know how it ends or how long it is going to last".¹¹² Korzeniowski does not tell us which of Girardin's publications impelled him to respond; besides, he may have been inspired by many of the French journalist's comments, which he most likely learnt about via the Russian press. It is certain that Girardin criticised the involvement of the western powers, especially France, in the Polish cause, and opposed the diplomatic intervention in St. Petersburg and the "war for Poland" within the borders of 1772. In *L'apaisement de la Pologne* he agreed, at most, to the restoration of the Kingdom of Poland to what it had been in 1815. And emphasising that "la Pologne ne perdrait donc rien et gagnerait tout à n'être plus indépendante, mais à être libre", he suggested that apart from the separation of Poland from Russia and Poland's complete incorporation

¹⁰⁹ Rafał Gerber. *Z dziejów prowokacji wśród emigracji polskiej w XIX wieku*. [In:] Albert Potocki. *Raporty szpiega*. Ed. R. Gerber. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1973, Vol. 1, pp. 5–130. On J. Tolstoy see Wiktoria Śliwowska. *W kręgu poprzedników Hercena*. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1971, pp. 26–28.

¹¹⁰ Śliwowska. *W kręgu poprzedników Hercena*, p. 26.

¹¹¹ "Prasa tajna z lat 1861–1864", part 2. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1969, p. 310: *Polska* No. 7, 8 August 1863.

¹¹² "Prasa tajna z lat 1861–1864", part 2, p. 381: *Niepodległość* No. 3, 4 August 1863.

into the Empire there was a third way which opened up a happy future for everyone, namely, “la Pologne libre dans la Russie libre”.¹¹³ The secret Polish newspaper *Prawda* reported: Girardin “has just published his libel entitled ‘L’apaisement de la Pologne – the pacification of Poland’, in which he advises us to commit suicide, that is that we should renounce our nationality and thus gain freedom, so as not to spill our blood needlessly, but to live longer, so that we might merge with the Muscovite giant and in this way satisfy its wolfish stomach longer. [...] Is Monsieur Girardin counting on medals or roubles? [...] Without fail the Tsar will number him among his saints”.¹¹⁴

Here it must be added that – when it was politically convenient – others also used the charge of Polish idleness during the Crimean War, an example being Napoleon III’s remarks to Zygmunt Krasiński in July 1858.¹¹⁵ In December 1861 Prince Napoleon, passing as a friend of Poland, and Minister Aleksander Walewski also made the charge in remarks to Władysław Czarotorski, oblivious of the fact that “France herself specifically demanded that we did not move”.¹¹⁶ But that is not all. On 18th April 1864, during an audience with Napoleon III, after which Władysław Czarotorski informed the Polish National Government that there was no hope of the western powers providing any help for the waning insurrection, the French Emperor flung the following remark in the face of the Polish diplomat: “You always take up your arms so inopportunistically and in such an untimely manner. During the Crimean War you sat quietly and now you rise up at a time of peace in Europe”. A very agitated and embittered Czarotorski replied: “As for the Crimean War, the Emperor knows who stopped us and what happened. The Emperor himself demanded that there was to be no insurrection and his government constantly declared that it would not have anything to do with our cause. As for today’s insurrection, the Emperor also knows who advised us to persevere and expand the movement instead of stifling it”.¹¹⁷

¹¹³ *L’apaisement de la Pologne*. Paris 1863 with the date: 15 May 1863, in particular pp. 125–138. The pamphlet was reprinted twice, in 1864 with the title on the cover *La Pologne et la diplomatie*. Girardin debated with the pro-Polish stance of such dailies as *La Patrie*, *Le Siècle* and with Louis de La Guéronnière from *La France*. He supported his own view e.g. with Karamzin’s letter to Aleksandr I and the publications of D.K. Schedo-Ferotti. See Irena Koberdowa. *Wielki książę Konstanty w Warszawie 1862–1863*. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1962, p. 255 ff. Against Girardin: e.g. *La diplomatie et l’opinion publique dans la question polonaise* (Paris 1863); Anatol de la Forge. *La Pologne en 1864. Lettre à M. Girardin* (Paris 1864); Charles-Edmond Chojecki. *Un Polonais. Répons à M. Girardin* (Paris 1855). Girardin’s anti-Polish attitude after 1863: Jerzy Zdrada. *Zmierzch Czarotorskich*. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1969, pp. 65 ff. 316.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 103; *Prawda* No. 11, 6 July 1863.

¹¹⁵ Zygmunt Krasiński. *Pisma filozoficzne i polityczne*. Ed. Paweł Hertz. Warszawa: Czytelnik, 1999, pp. 284–285: *Drugie posłuchanie u Napoleona III*.

¹¹⁶ Czarotorski. *Pamiętnik 1860–1864*, pp. 61–62.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 200–201. See Henryk Wereszycki, Jerzy Zdrada. *Polska działalność dyplomatyczna (1860–1900)*. [In:] *Historia dyplomacji polskiej*, Vol. III: 1795–1918. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1982, pp. 622–625.

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Poland and Muscovy is a polemical political treatise targeted at western public opinion. It puts forward a clearly defined anti-Russian thesis and criticises the policy of the western powers towards Russia. The formal points of departure for Korzeniowski were Katkov's chauvinist propaganda and the position of Girardin. His aim was to indicate the extent of the threat to "civilisation" – i.e. to Europe – posed by the spread of Muscovite "barbarism", which resulted from the absence of a factor guaranteeing stability, peace and safety, namely an independent Poland. Korzeniowski did not consider himself to be a prisoner of Russia simply because he was an exile, because for him this was merely a natural consequence of the fact that – as a Pole, together with his whole nation – he found himself enchained by Muscovite despotism. *Poland and Muscovy* testified to his spiritual independence. It was from this position, underscored by the personal fate of his family and the ongoing uprising, that he treated and judged the Russian State, its system of administration and the condition of its Society. This determined the arguments and the language he used.

The formal side of Korzeniowski's writing, his mode of expression and his language, has generally (with some exceptions) been assessed rather harshly. "I suspect," says Zdzisław Najder, "that under the whole layer of pretentious verbiage he was hiding a concrete and empirical mind, obsessed with and befuddled by conventions on which he had been nourished and which he was unable to shake off".¹¹⁸ The language and phraseology, as well as the temperature and imagery in the narrative of *Poland and Muscovy* indicate that Korzeniowski was not only unable to "shake them off", but used them quite consciously,¹¹⁹ because – putting to one side his individual style – this was a reflection of the feelings and views of the generation of the 1863 insurgents and was also considered to be "the obvious truth" by insurgents in later years. Korzeniowski looked at Russia solely through the prism of the struggle between the two nations for their political place in Europe. Invective and strong "imagery" (even bordering on graphomania) were meant to reinforce his frequently well-formulated political arguments.

In *Poland and Muscovy* it often seems as though Apollo forgot that he was writing a political treatise and not a poetical epic... Thus we have phrases modelled on Mickiewicz: "The great French revolution thundered. [...] Napoleon the Great was sent!", but eventually "to a rock he retreated and there expired in indefatigable glory".¹²⁰ Or his references to Jean-Jacques Rousseau's advice to the Poles, cautioning the whole of Europe: "Meanwhile, to keep in training, Muscovy chews the body of living Poland as if she were dead. Poland has been swallowed, but not digested. The process of digestion has just begun. When it ends, the turn of other nations will

¹¹⁸ Najder. "Introduction". [In:] *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. XIV; cf. Najder wstęp do *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 21.

¹¹⁹ See *Ojczyzna* No. 46, 25 June 1864.

¹²⁰ *Ojczyzna* No. 35, 12 June 1864.

come”.¹²¹ This is how he characterises the invaders: “With bloodstained knives in their hands, bent over the quivering body of their victim, the accomplices of the crime looked into each other’s eyes. After the deed, Muscovy raised her unbelieving eyes towards Prussia and Austria; Prussia and Austria looked in fear at Muscovy. [...] The crime was done. Prussia’s fear and Austria’s shame vis-à-vis European governments were there. Muscovy’s terror tormented them. Pressured by relations with the Hosudarstwo, they had to look into the muddy hollow, and in its darkness they saw anti-civilisation, belching its pestilence and mortality at humanity, with the instinct of animal dominance over them”.¹²² And let us consider the following reflection, which is one of those that say so much about Apollo: “Finally, we can also conclude from history that when civilisation lacks human strength, there is a sudden divine uplift, as happened in 1588, when a storm at sea thwarted the famous Armada, which embodied the violence, intrigues and manoeuvres of Spain, striving to quell England, the representative of industry and the spirit of individual freedom”.¹²³

Such examples of late Romantic mannerisms abound in *Poland and Muscovy* and some of them will be quoted below. Unfortunately these striking, colourful comparisons and stylistic intricacies often obscure apt observations about international politics which show that Korzeniowski was exceedingly well informed about the situation of his times and possessed a sound knowledge of history.

* * *

The text, published in a newspaper entitled *Ojczyzna* (The Fatherland), and consisting of three chapters, was the first part of a larger work which Apollo had planned. The title he chose was *Polska cierpiąca w Hosudarstwie. 1772–1859* (Poland Suffering in the Hosudarstwo. 1772–1859). The next part was to be *Polska pracująca w Hosudarstwie* (Poland Working in the Hosudarstwo), which Apollo had wished to devote to the aspirations and political actions of Polish Society before the outbreak of the 1863 insurrection, but which he most likely never wrote. What he left to us is only a critical outline of the policy of Alexander II, which concludes *Polska cierpiąca w Hosudarstwie*.¹²⁴

The subtitle of *Poland and Muscovy* identifies the work as being the *Memoirs of xxx* Begun in 186...* Indeed, the introductory part presents Apollo’s last moments in the Warsaw Citadel, when he heard his sentence and was sent into exile. The literary form faithfully depicts the conditions in the prison, the procedures involved and the people in charge, sarcastically called the “social order”.¹²⁵ Certain “inaccuracies” (e.g. the omission of the fact that Ewelina was also sentenced to exile) were intentional

¹²¹ Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Poland and Muscovy. Memoirs of xxx* Begun in 186...*, p. 79; cf. *Ojczyzna* No. 28, 4 June 1864.

¹²² *Ojczyzna* No. 35, 12 June 1864.

¹²³ *Ojczyzna* No. 49, 29 June 1864.

¹²⁴ *Ojczyzna* No. 47 and 48 of 27 and 28 June 1864.

¹²⁵ Apollo Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Poland and Muscovy. Memoirs of xxx* Begun in 186...*, p. 75; cf. *Ojczyzna* No. 27, 3 June 1864.

attempts to camouflage the author's identity. This is also the case when it comes to the sentence itself, which is presented as a citation from a document, but is in fact only its literary version recreated from memory, giving only the main points of the indictment, since a tsarist verdict could not possibly have included any phraseology emphasizing the patriotic motives of someone who, after all, was considered to be a "*miateznik*" (rebel).¹²⁶ Very aptly, and with expressive disdain, Apollo characterises the members of the Commission of Inquiry, the gendarmes ("armed spies"), Żuczkowski – "Morok": "for many years host, steward, administrator, housekeeper, watchman, spy, torturer and master of ceremonies in the dungeons of the Warsaw Citadel" ("a more appropriate name, however, would have been 'Judas Iscariot', for the man was a Pole"), or "a *geroy* not known to me by name" (most likely Roznov). Also worth mentioning is the description of the role of the Citadel: "the Warsaw Citadel is the city's ever-ready machine of destruction and at the same time an immense dungeon where tsardom buries Polish patriotism. [...] Tsar Nicholas, after fomenting and provoking the 1831 Revolution with his tsarist 'charity', built his comment in stone and dug it firmly into the ground – a heap of boulders, bristling with guns and crawling with thugs, torturers and other vermin [...] throttling one generation of Polish patriots after another. Such is the Book of Genesis of the Alexandrian Citadel in Warsaw".¹²⁷ Observations on the tsarist system of repression and the lack of law and order have been entwined into this "confession", as it is termed by Apollo himself.

The next three parts of the treatise are of a different nature. The reflections on the "Hosudarstwo", i.e. the Russian political system and the system of administration, namely autocracy, and its impact on Russian Society, highlight the fundamental difference between Russia and Western Europe. This was meant to stress all the more clearly the danger which was encoded in the imperialist aspirations of tsardom and the Russian nation. This great indictment of "the Hosudarstwo system" was illustrated by the history of the subjugation of the Polish nation as a result of the partitions and the erroneous policy of western states towards the Polish cause. Two accounts added as appendices – on the idea of a Polish insurrection between 1854 and 1855 and on the peasant movement in the Ukraine in 1855 – serve both as historical source texts and as ideological documents. The intention behind the first account was to remind western commentators and politicians, on the pretext of arguing with Girardin, about the real and lost chance of defeating Russia in the Crimean War, and at the same time to make them realise that the ongoing Polish Uprising was once again giving Europe an opportunity to liberate itself from the threat of Muscovite imperialism. The second account admonished the Polish *szlachta* for the wasted opportunity for a shared struggle against Muscovy together with the peasantry, in accordance with Krasieński's words "The Polish peasantry along with the Polish nobility".

¹²⁶ *Ojczyzna* No. 29, 5 June 1864; Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, pp. 114–115.

¹²⁷ Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Poland and Muscovy. Memoirs of xxx* Begun in 186...*, pp. 75–77; cf. *Ojczyzna* No. 27, 3 June 1864.

* * *

Korzeniowski analyses relations between Muscovy and Europe from the perspective of the age-old struggle between western civilisation and barbarism (coming from the North). The history and characteristics of this “barbarism” are presented in the text in order to stress the fact that Muscovy is its heir. “Muscovite barbarism has had so many embodiments that from each of them it has sucked some particular power and today it is, so to speak, barbarity in the progress of barbarism”. Muscovy was formed from Mongolian “barbarism”. And the result? “The massive body of barbarism has expanded from the Icy Sea to the Black Sea and again from the Vistula to the Great Ocean” – and, what is worse, “like a dishonest steward it sits brazenly with members of European governments”.¹²⁸

What, then, is Muscovy, thus shaped by the Mongolian yoke? It is an entity that is unlike any other – it is a “Hosudarstwo” – as Apollo called it, using the Ukrainian name, in an attempt to define the Russian State and its social system more clearly.¹²⁹ Even such terms as “Muscovy”, “Muscovite”, old-Polish “Moskwicin” or “tsardom” – which were then commonly used and which also had definitely negative connotations – did not seem sufficiently pejorative to Apollo. The term “Hosudarstwo” was meant to expose the real character of Russia, revealing the extent of its otherness, the magnitude of the danger it posed and the scale of its responsibility. For Korzeniowski, who was not alone in this view, Muscovy – the “Hosudarstwo” – was pure evil, the embodiment of evil threatening the order of the western world – a “system” that stood in complete contradiction to what Apollo called “humanity” and what he understood as human, civil and national rights, as they were defined during the French Revolution. The two systems of values – “humanity” and “Hosudarstwo” – struggle with each other, just like good and evil. Muscovy and evil are one. To defeat this evil it is necessary to defeat Muscovy “in the name of God and humanity”. This is a mystical task – a religious war in the name of good as the highest gift from God and a political struggle in the name of “humanity”, i.e. humanitarian and social rules shaped by the culture of the western world, by European culture. Evil fights against the divine gift of freedom and therefore “with its million-strong foot humanity must stamp it out, under pain of its own annihilation”. On a political plane, the fight between good and evil takes place through the struggle between “the rule of nationality”, the good given by God, and the “Hosudarstwo”, which is a creation of Satan.¹³⁰ Europe may lose this deadly battle

¹²⁸ *Ojczyzna* No. 49, 29 June 1864.

¹²⁹ The concept of “Hosudarstwo” was taken over from Korzeniowski by Giller. *Historia powstania narodu polskiego w 1861–1864*, Vol. III. Paris 1870, p. 35. Giller himself, instead of the term “Russification”, used the word “zmoskalenie” (from the verb “zmoskalić” – “to Muscovite”), *ibid.* pp. 237–238. Also Giller’s mode of expression betrays some similarities to Korzeniowski: General Governorates in Lithuania and Ruthenia earned the tsar’s favour by “grinding Poles in the mortar of national unity”, *ibid.* p. 293.

¹³⁰ *Ojczyzna* No. 34, 11 June 1864. Narcyza Żmichowska wrote in prison in 1851: “the struggle between Poland and Russia is not about rights or the name of the land but about good and evil, about conscience and virtue”.

if it fails to erect a barrier on Muscovy's destructive path in the form of an independent Poland. Justifying this historic necessity, Korzeniowski formulates an extensive catalogue of political invectives serving the purpose of characterising Muscovy – evil incarnate – all the more clearly.

Thus the “Hosudarstwo” in its present form was an invention of Tsar Peter the Great, who turned his country into a “machine” in order to “pulverise humanity”. As a result, the “Muscovite”, once a human being, has turned into “a thoughtless wheel” in the machine. As “nothing human or divine is left” in them, “Muscovites are not a nation – a country – they are nothing but a Hosudarstwo”.¹³¹ There is no Society in Russia, there is only a human mass, which is submissive and subject to the apparatus of power, the very essence of the “Hosudarstwo”: from the Tsars Nicholas I and Alexander II to the St. Petersburg ministers and dignitaries, the Viceroys Paskevich, Gorchakov and Berg in Warsaw, down to the Governor Generals Bubikov, Vasilchikov and Bezak in Kiev. They are the emanation and the substance of the “Hosudarstwo”. It is thanks to these “pillars of the throne” that autocracy prevails.¹³² “The whole of Muscovy is a prison”, Apollo went on, in which “falsehood piles upon falsehood”. Its “civilian class” is “thievery in uniform but unarmed” while its “military class – [is] the same thievery, only armed for plunder”.¹³³ In short, “Muscovy” – “Hosudarstwo” – autocracy, is a contradiction of freedom, of human and civil rights and of western civilisation. It is therefore the greatest enemy of Polish independence, with whom no reconciliation is possible. All that is left is a fight to the death.¹³⁴

What follows this criticism of the “Hosudarstwo” and tsardom in “all its odiousness” is a similar assessment of Russian Society, regarding mainly its political conduct. If a person is only a “wheel” in the machinery of the “Hosudarstwo” and “everything belongs to the Tsar”, then Russia is simply a country of slaves. There are no citizens, only subjects who are incapable of freedom, since “barbarism” “cannot be a country”.¹³⁵ The conviction that “a Pole has freedom in his blood, while a Muscovite has servitude” was very common among Poles at that time.¹³⁶ Korzeniowski saw no sign of a new Pugachev Rebellion, or an uprising on the same scale as the Decembrist revolt, nor any chances of a democratic evolution of the nation and Society.¹³⁷ For Apollo, an ominous symptom of the “Hosudarstwo” was the Russian Slavophile ideology which had been

¹³¹ Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Poland and Muscovy. Memoirs of xxx* Begun in 186...*, pp. 75–78; cf. *Ojczyzna* No. 27 and 34, 3 and 11 June 1864.

¹³² See Kucharzewski. *Od białego do czerwonego caratu*, Vol. 1, p. 93 ff.

¹³³ Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Poland and Muscovy. Memoirs of xxx* Begun in 186...*, pp. 76, 78; cf. *Ojczyzna* No. 27 and 28 of 3 and 4 June 1864.

¹³⁴ Identically e.g. Agaton Giller. *Podróż więźnia etapami do Syberii w roku 1854*. Lipsk 1866, Vol. 1, p. 116.

¹³⁵ *Ojczyzna* No. 50, 30 June 1864.

¹³⁶ Giller. *Podróż więźnia*, Vol. 2, p. 144.

¹³⁷ These were the hopes of exiles e.g. Rufin Piotrowski. *Pamiętniki z pobytu na Syberii*. Poznań 1860–1861, Vol. 1–3; Jakub Gordon. *Obrazki caryzmu*. Lipsk 1863, p. 163. See Jerzy Fiećko. *Rosja w zsyłkowych tekstach Agatona Gillera*. [In:] *Polacy a Rosjanie. Poljaki i russkie*, p. 120.

spreading since the 1840s, propagating “unity” under the leadership of “Holy Russia” and declaring Russia’s superiority over the West. He also believed that the close relationship between the Orthodox Church and the autocracy warped the development of Russian Society. He did not believe that the rallying cry of freedom for the common people could take root in Russian soil or that Muscovy – that “cascade of tyranny” – would ever become a liberal state, even when “the sun of freedom shines through / And the western wind warms up the land”.¹³⁸ This is what distinguished him from the previous generation of conspirators, who did not think only about “taking revenge on the Tsar” and went into exile hoping that

| | |
|---|--|
| Gdziekolwiek wyrok carski nas zawlecze, | Wherever we go by the verdict of tsardom |
| Oszukamy jego dumę, | We shall deceive his might, |
| Niesiemy z sobą prawa człowiecze! | We carry human rights! |
| Niesiemy wolności dżumę. ¹³⁹ | We carry the contagion of freedom. |

Apollo was not interested in change in Russia. He wanted to screen Russia off by means of a free Poland. Thus he rejected any agreements or settlements with the “Hosudarstwo” of the kind that Wielopolski had attempted to achieve. Similarly, he did not see any need for co-operation with the anti-tsarist opposition – the *Zemlya i volya* (Land and Liberty) movement in Russia, or the group centred around the *Kolokol* newspaper in exile. Most likely he did not know that the leaders of the Central National Committee (Komitet Centralny Narodowy) and the Polish National Government, the continuators of the Movement Committee (which he himself had founded) had on the eve of the outbreak of the January Uprising made an agreement with the Russian revolutionaries in the name of their common struggle against tsardom.¹⁴⁰ Henryk Kamieński – a conspirator who was later imprisoned in the Citadel and exiled to Siberia and who had written the *Prawdy żywotne narodu polskiego* (1843), one of the most significant works on Polish democratic thinking to have inspired Apollo’s generation – wrote about a (not merely revolutionary) settlement with Russia which could be possible in the future. Like Korzeniowski, Kamieński in his highly acclaimed work *Rosja i Europa. Polska* (Russia and Europe. Poland)¹⁴¹ took a critical view of the Russian State and Russian Society, pointing to “the fanaticism of servitude among Muscovites” and “Russia’s possessiveness”. At the same time, however, he believed in “Russia’s complete transformation” and, most importantly – still convinced of the spiritual superiority of the Poles – thought that in the face of a growing threat from Germany “a brotherly relationship with

¹³⁸ Mickiewicz. *Dziela*, Vol. III, p. 285.

¹³⁹ Karol Baliński. *Pożegnanie*. [In:] K. Baliński. *Pisma*. Poznań 1849, p. 5.

¹⁴⁰ Wereszycki, Zdrada. *Polska działalność dyplomatyczna (1860–1914)*, pp. 472–477; Kieniewicz. *Powstanie styczniowe*, pp. 336–338.

¹⁴¹ Henryk Kamieński. *Rosja i Europa. Polska. Wstęp do badań nad Rosją i Moskalami przez X.Y.Z.* Paris 1857. Quotations after the edition with the introduction by B. Łagowski, Warszawa 1999.

Russia constituting the end of our captivity” was possible and would even help to civilise the barbarian state.¹⁴²

Since the Russians – as Korzeniowski wrote – were incapable of freedom, the programme to promote a fight “*za waszq i naszq wolność*” (“for our freedom and yours”) in 1831 was a political error, as “in relations with Muscovy, whoever, even for a moment, believes her tsars, and whoever, even fleetingly, considers Muscovites to be people who are capable of freedom, must be deceived, and thus defeated”.¹⁴³ This was a decidedly isolated view, departing from the whole Polish insurrectionary tradition which had been cultivated since 1831 and which had been expressed in the 22th January 1863 manifesto of the Polish National Government and developed by all generations up to that time. Korzeniowski’s memory of all the suffering caused by Russia precluded any reflection on a possible shared future. As an enemy of imperial autocracy, Apollo set himself apart from the State and could not see any other Russia or any friendly forces there, even among the Russian opponents of the “Hosudarstwo”.

This bleak portrait of “Muscovy” – the “Hosudarstwo” – penned by Korzeniowski was not fundamentally incompatible with that which emerges from reading Polish political periodicals, commentaries, diplomatic documents, diaries and memoirs of the time, especially those written during the period of the “Great Emigration” (1831–1870) and during the January Uprising. The same reasoning can also be found in the materials presented by Zygmunt Krasiński to the French Minister François Guizot and later to Napoleon III during the Crimean War.¹⁴⁴ However, Apollo was most probably inspired by Mickiewicz’s *Paris Lectures*, where the national bard said, for example, that Poland and Russia embodied two mutually exclusive ideals which were engaged in a “perennial struggle” with each other. It can be said with some accuracy that clear borrowings from Mickiewicz are visible in Apollo’s writing, the sole difference being that “Korzeniowski’s tone is exceptionally passionate” and always more so than in the case of other writers.¹⁴⁵ However, similar language was typical of the insurgent press of 1863 and 1864, which – following Franciszek Duchński’s theory about the Finno-Ugrian origin of the “Muscovites” – did not number the Russians among Slav nations and emphasised their “Asiatic spirit of annexation”, stressing that “just like fire and

¹⁴² Kamieński. *Rosja i Europa. Polska*, pp. 261 ff., 265, 307 ff., 357 ff. See Zbigniew Opacki. *Barbaria rosyjska. Rosja w historiozofii i myśli politycznej Henryka Kamieńskiego*. Gdańsk: Wydawnictwo Marpress, 1993.

¹⁴³ Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Poland and Muscovy. Memoirs of xxx* Begun in 186...*; cf. *Ojczyzna* No. 42, 21 June 1864.

¹⁴⁴ Krasiński. *Pisma filozoficzne i polityczne*, pp. 86–97, 214–219. See Jerzy Fiećko. *Rosja Krasińskiego. Rzecz o nieprzejednaniu*. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. A. Mickiewicza, 2005, p. 237 ff.

¹⁴⁵ Miłosz. “Apollo N. Korzeniowski: Joseph Conrad’s Father”, pp. 136; cf. Miłosz. “Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski”, p. 76. See Jerzy Fiećko. *Rosja w prelekcjach paryskich Adama Mickiewicza*. [In:] *Księga Mickiewiczowska*. Ed. Zofia Trojanowiczowa, Zbigniew Przychodniak. Poznań: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu im. A. Mickiewicza, 1998, p. 183.

water, Mongolian tsarism and Poland will not form a whole”.¹⁴⁶ This was the canon, as it were, of Polish thought on Russia at that time.

The darkest sides of the Russian system of government and the condition of Russian Society were exposed by Russians themselves – Petr Chadaev, Aleksandr Herzen, Nikolai Turgenev, Ivan Golovin and Nikolai Chernyshevsky – who also condemned the policy of Nicholas I towards Russia.¹⁴⁷ A similar tone reverberated in comments by western friends of Poland. Adolphe de Custine’s bestseller *La Russie en 1839* caused a great stir: it debunked the political system of Nicholas I and warned Europe against the Russian threat.¹⁴⁸ It would be difficult to ascribe “typically Polish Russophobia” – a label attached to all insurgents who did not declare their readiness to co-operate with “the Russian people” eagerly enough – to all the above-mentioned writers, especially to the Russians.

What Russia was – especially in the reign of Nicholas I – was known well enough in Polish homes without the need to read de Custine. Historical accounts and studies that came into Apollo’s hands only confirmed that the experience he had gathered in his contacts with the Russian authorities were not the result of “distorted vision”, but the description of a reality – the worst period of reactionary rule in Russia in the 1840s and the 1850s. Korzeniowski was not theorising, as he had become very familiar with “the machine of the Hosudarstwo” in Ruthenia, where he had observed bribery, the malicious cheating of the Polish *drobna szlachta* (the poorer nobility) out of their *indygenat* (a recognition of noble status), religious repression, the beating of peasants with clubs and the use of gendarmes to terrorise the Russian and Ukrainian *volnodumstvo*, as well as Polish supporters of “unreasonable nationhood”, who were sent to serve in Orenburg regiments or in the Caucasus for many years; and he also knew from personal experience what a “perjurious court” was. For Apollo, the most dangerous consequence of the Russian system of government was its destructive impact on the attitude of Polish Society: the *szlachta* exploited the “*krepostny*” peasants, who were tied to the land, and saw opportunism as a civic virtue. In the words of Henryk Rzewuski: “having by the grace of God become part of a powerful community of Russians, we bring our provincial produce to the general and common treasury”.¹⁴⁹ For his part, Michał Grabowski, who was esteemed in these circles, added

¹⁴⁶ See e.g. *Strażnica* No. 4, 30 April 1863, *Prasa tajna*, part 1, pp. 109–111. See Leonarda Mariak. *Perswazyjność prasy tajnej okresu powstania styczniowego na przykładzie leksyki*. Szczecin: Wydawnictwo Naukowe Uniwersytetu Szczecińskiego, 2001.

¹⁴⁷ E.g. Aleksander Hercen. *Więzenie i wygnanie* (London 1854); M. Turgieniew. *La Russie et les Russes* (Paris 1847, Vols. I–III); Ivan Gołowin. *La Russie sous Nicolas I* (Paris 1845). See Opacki. *Barbaria rosyjska*, pp. 39–40.

¹⁴⁸ Astolphe Custine. *La Russie en 1839*, Vol. 1–2. Paris 1843, Polish edition. Warszawa 1995, Vols. 1–2. See Najder. *Joseph Conrad’s parents*, pp. 32–33; cf. Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*, p. 40 and Najder. *Conrad, Russia and Dostoevsky*. [In:] *Conrad in Perspective. Essays on Art and Fidelity*, pp. 120–121; cf. *Conrad, Rosja i Dostojewski*, pp. 128–129.

¹⁴⁹ Henryk Rzewuski. *Mięszaniny obyczajowe Jarosza Bejły*. Wilno 1841, Vol. 2, p. 234.

an ideological justification: "the supposed history of independent Poland is now at an end"; and he boiled down his Polish patriotism to "being a slow but useful activist in the fortunes of the great Russian State", since he "believe[d] Russian autocracy to be the one indispensable instrument".¹⁵⁰

In exposing Russia's imperial goals, Korzeniowski was referring to the so-called testament of Peter the Great, as he was deeply convinced of its authenticity, together with a considerable number of European journalists (and probably all Poles) at that time.¹⁵¹ In reality, however, the "testament" was an apocryphal text written by General Michał Sokolnicki, who was a "well-placed" observer of the political realities of the day, i.e. the development of the Russian Empire during the Polish partitions and the wars with Turkey. The time of the "testament" arrived in 1812, when – preparing for war with Russia – Napoleon found this text to be a useful piece of propaganda and had it published. This is how its "political life" began, and it lasted until the end of the 19th century.¹⁵² This apocryphal text – a fine example of its kind – tended to appear on the political scene particularly at moments when it was deemed necessary to undermine Russia's political position and prestige in the eyes of public opinion. Naturally, Polish anti-Russian propagandists were more than willing to make use of the "testament". It was used, for example, by prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski and Maurycy Mochnacki quoted it in his *Powstanie narodu polskiego* (The Uprising of the Polish Nation). It was reprinted in compilations of Polish history for the western reader and was recommended to journalists attacking Russia during the January Uprising. The continuation of the political tradition of Peter the Great was also remarked on in memoirs published in Paris and London as well as in political treatises, whose arguments and content – apart from the language in which they were couched – did not differ much from Korzeniowski's writings.¹⁵³ From the Polish point of view, the alleged "testament of Peter the Great" was an excellent anti-Russian device. Reprints and transcripts of the "testament" were passed from hand to hand. Russian diplomats and journalists disputed its authenticity, though not always successfully. During the January Uprising a pamphlet published in Brussels by one G. Berkholz, most likely sponsored by the Third Section, attacked the foreign policy of Napoleon III, calling him "the virtuoso of inventing political

¹⁵⁰ Qtd. in Jerzy Fiećko. *Rosja, Polska i misje zesłańców. Syberyjska twórczość Agatona Gillera*. Poznań 1997, p. 161.

¹⁵¹ *Ojczyzna* No. 34, 11 June 1864.

¹⁵² Michał Sokolnicki. "À propos du centenaire de 1812. Le testament de Pierre le Grand. Origines d'un prétendu document historiques". *Revue des Sciences Politiques* 1912, Vol. XXVII, pp. 88–98; M. Sokolnicki. *General Michał Sokolnicki 1760–1815*. Kraków 1912, pp. 60–66, 220–223, 325–339, 409–411, 414–415; Orest Subtelny. "'Peter I's Testament': A Reassessment". *Slavic Review* 1974, Vol. 33, No. 4, pp. 663–678.

¹⁵³ E.g. the work published several times: Leonard Chodźko. *La Pologne historique, littéraire, monumentale et illustrée*. Paris 1846–1847, testament pp. 25–27; P. L'Ermite. *Une dernière fois sauvons la Pologne suivi du Testament de Pierre le Grand*. Paris 1863, testament, pp. 25–29; *Des conditions d'une paix durable en Pologne*, Paris 1863 by Leon Zbyszewski.

canards” such as the alleged “testament of Peter the Great”, which for years had been used by the Poles to slander Russia.¹⁵⁴ Thus for decades the “testament of Peter the Great” functioned in the Polish and European mind as the best document with which to explain the doctrine of Russia’s imperial expansion. Some would say that this was dictated by a Polish anti-Russian obsession. However, the text was also published in Germany and France during the 1854 Crimean War, on the eve of the 1877–1878 Russian-Turkish war and when Bismarck was Chancellor the text was reprinted in a German military periodical.¹⁵⁵

It is possible that Korzeniowski came across the “testament” during his studies in St. Petersburg, though his first guide may have been Mickiewicz, who in *Przegląd wojska* (The Military Parade) wrote that “Peter showed the tsars the way towards greatness” – and, deriding European delight in the fact that “Tsar Peter civilised Russia”, he warned that their eyes would be opened “when the Tsar orders to worship and praise / Siberia, kibitkas, ukases, and knouts”.¹⁵⁶ Mickiewicz also referred to the “testament” in his *Paris Lectures* and – although he emphasised that “its authenticity could not be proved” – he still presented his listeners with a very suggestive vision of Russian expansion from the Baltic Sea to Tsargrad merely in order to ultimately “conquer everything”.¹⁵⁷ The affinity with Mickiewicz’s thoughts and feelings – professed by many of Apollo’s contemporaries – is clearly visible in *Poland and Muscovy*.

* * *

Outlining the history of Europe since the 18th century, Korzeniowski stresses that the “Hosudarstwo” consistently fulfilled its “mission of annihilation”, which was facilitated by the political mistakes of the West vis-à-vis “barbarism”. The gravest, and as it were primary mistake was western passivity towards the partitioning of Poland. This

¹⁵⁴ Gustav Berkholtz (Bergholtz?). *Napoleon 1-er auteur du Testament de Pierre-le-Grand*. Bruxelles 1863, p. 43; the same author published also *Das Testament Peters des Grossen, eine Erfindung Napoleons*. Saint Petersburg 1877.

¹⁵⁵ *Politisches Testament Peter des Grossen* Berlin 1854 and the Polish translation *Testament polityczny Piotra Wielkiego*. Poznań 1854; Jean-Joseph Gaume. *Le Testament de Pierre le Grand ou la clef de l’avenir*. Paris 1876, p. 141 with the thesis: “Le vrai danger de l’Europe, c’est la Russie. Ce danger est formidable, et chaque jour il devient plus menaçant. N’ayons pas peur des Russes; mais ayons peur de nous”. Harry Bresslau. “Das Testament Peter’s des Grossen”. *Historische Zeitschrift* 1879, Bd. XLI, pp. 385–409; Bresslau suggests that A. Thiers wrote *Les auteurs du Testament Pierre le Grand. Page historique*. Paris 1872; *Russland und das Testament Peters des Grossen. Eine historische Skizze*. Berlin–Leipzig 1876; *Pierre le Grand. Son règne et son testament*. Bruxelles 1877, excluding publications in the press. Furthermore, there were also anonymous editions of the same text in German in Bern in 1854, in Berlin in 1870, and in *Russischen Revue* in 1877. After the break of the German–Russian alliance *Testament polityczny i autentyczny Piotra Wielkiego* (Toruń 1895) was published several times in the Prussian partition. The apocrypha was particularly popular in the period of revival of the pro-independence movement prior to 1914.

¹⁵⁶ Mickiewicz. *Dzieła*, Vol. III, pp. 292–293.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, Vol. X: *Literatura słowiańska. Kurs drugi*. Warszawa 1955, pp. 93–94: lecture VII of 18 January 1842.

view was well established in Polish patriotic circles, but Apollo's expression of it was his alone. "Europe felt – he wrote – that this partition was a moral crime", yet despite this awareness of "the murder of Poland", the dominant position was the "blindness of the governments and peoples of Europe towards Muscovy [which] prevented them from discerning in the partitions of Poland that smell of death which emanated from the grave of a murdered nation, forced open by the three sceptres. Nobody foresaw that this was the first exhalation of the pestilence carried by the Hosudarstwo, annihilating the whole development of humanity in Europe". And he continued: "As one man, contemporary historians and moral philosophers, footmen, chamberlains and government factotums strove to alleviate the impression made by the partitioning of Poland", saying it was "a sort of warning and preaching about the misery of the unfortunate nation and its deserved punishment from heaven for not showing blind and servile respect for government ideals".¹⁵⁸ Here Apollo was not far from the truth: western historiography of the time created a negative stereotype of Polish history which was adopted by Russian historians and journalists. This was reflected in the content of school textbooks, which conditioned the historical and political awareness of subsequent generations in the West and in Russia, thus influencing their attitude towards Polish aspirations to independence.¹⁵⁹

Korzeniowski did not overlook the role of Prussia and Austria in the partitions and considered their involvement to have been decisive. However, he directed his attack mainly at Russia, believing it to be the most formidable enemy of Polish independence. He rejected the view according to which the decisions of the 1815 Congress of Vienna had been advantageous for the Poles owing to the creation of the Kingdom of Poland. Looking at the issue from outside the "Congress" borders, i.e. from the "Taken Lands", he believed that what had in fact happened in Vienna was an endorsement of the division of Polish territory into five separate parts and that the formula concerning respect for Polish national rights throughout the area of the former Polish Commonwealth was merely a decoration attached to the treaty. Thus, for the sake of peace, Europe had sacrificed the Poles, allowing the "Muscovites to steal the jewel from the treasury of humanity – Poland",¹⁶⁰ and for decades turned a blind eye to the repressions in all three partitions. The most lenient treatment in Apollo's writing is given to British policy, which in his view was the most advantageous for Poland.¹⁶¹

The outline of Russia's policy towards Poland from the 18th century to the year 1861 is quite a different matter: this is the story of *Polska cierpiąca w Hosudarstwie*. Korzeniowski rejects the legend of Alexander I, which was quite popular at the time, presenting him as "the benefactor, renovator and reviver" of Poland, for these

¹⁵⁸ *Ojczyzna* No. 35, 12 June 1864.

¹⁵⁹ See M.H. Serejski. *Europa a rozbiory Polski. Studium historiograficzne*. Warszawa 2009.

¹⁶⁰ *Ojczyzna* No. 50, 30 June 1864.

¹⁶¹ *Ojczyzna* No. 36, 14 June 1864.

were “names lisped out by renegades” out of gratitude for being able to retain “their property and titles”.¹⁶² Alexander I deluded Europe and the Poles. He “became seemingly tender and liberal, using Baroness Barbara von Krüdener’s skirt as his banner; he lied; he nearly cried; he would have deceived God himself – let alone European governments”. The Tsar’s promises “appeased English honesty” and everyone took the creation of the Kingdom of Poland at face value, together with the declaration that he would unite with it “the provinces and lands taken to Muscovy”. Apollo accused prince Adam Czartoryski of “having given moral approval and credence” to Alexander’s promises, which finally persuaded England to consent to the Congress solution of the Polish question. Admittedly, very soon afterwards Czartoryski realised his mistake, “broke off the impossible friendship with the Muscovite despot” and began to fight against him, yet “all the Polish distress” could not be forgotten.¹⁶³ The true face of tsardom was revealed by the repressions against Polish youth in Vilnius, the murder of “the Bestuzhevs, the Pestelevs, the Rylievs”, Russia’s taking the path of war to Constantinople – and, finally, her readiness to crush the revolutions in France and Belgium. The progress of Nicholas I was halted by the November Uprising and thus – as Apollo rightly observes – the Poles saved Europe from “the barbarians”.¹⁶⁴

Evaluating the reasons for the failure of the January Uprising, Korzeniowski focuses on political and military issues: the leaders’ lack of faith in the national forces, their willingness to negotiate with Nicholas as “the King of Poland” and at the same time to fight “against the Muscovite Tsar”, the disastrous “release of Grand Duke Constantine and thousands of Muscovite soldiers”, their failure to bring the Lithuanian corps over onto their side, their distancing themselves from “the provincial movements in Lithuania and Ruthenia”, their procrastination in military actions – and, finally, the fact that they “left the capital and the whole cause at the mercy of the Tsar, when the forces of the revolution were growing and were capable of crushing tsarist might”.¹⁶⁵ This succinct assessment clearly echoes Mochnacki’s words: “it was not our inability, but our lack of skill!”, since “the internal power” of the nation “was ill-used by us ourselves”, and so the insurrection “did not deserve the inscription: *usque ad finem*”.¹⁶⁶ Another factor was the optimism and faith in the nation’s own strength, which was present in the writings of the democrats during the period of the “Great Emigration” – the optimism with which Apollo joined the pro-independence movement in 1861. Recalling the repressions that had lasted since the fall of the November Uprising and whose aim had been to subjugate the Polish nation, he warned: “As

¹⁶² Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Poland and Muscovy. Memoirs of xxx* Begun in 186...*, pp. 75–76; cf. *Ojczyzna* No. 27, 3 June 1864.

¹⁶³ *Ojczyzna* No. 36, 14 June 1864.

¹⁶⁴ *Ojczyzna* No. 42, 21 June 1864. On the role of the uprising: Józef Dutkiewicz. *Francja a Polska w 1831 r.* Łódź: Łódzkie Towarzystwo Naukowe, 1950.

¹⁶⁵ *Ojczyzna* No. 42, 21 June 1864.

¹⁶⁶ Maurycy Mochnacki. *Powstanie narodu polskiego w roku 1830 i 1831*. Ed. Stefan Kieniewicz. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1984, Vol. 1, pp. 52–53.

long as this blood continues to ooze out, European peoples can be at peace; but the blood and the whole nation can come to an end”, and then “the last drop of this blood will become the ruin of these peoples”. For if the Polish nation perishes, then between Europe and Muscovy, “between humanity and the furious horde, between progress and the violence against it, between [...] freedom and the most despicable captivity, there will be no buckler, no guard, no salvation”. Muscovy, fortified by the suppression of Poland, will immediately resume her imperial expansion and will again set out against Turkey “as the nourishment of the Hosudarstwo, indicated by Peter’s testament”.¹⁶⁷

As the suppression of Poland and the seizure of its lands strengthened Muscovy so much that her military power and imperial goals threatened the whole of Europe, the only and most effective way of preventing this catastrophe was the reinstatement of an independent Poland to serve as a shield protecting the West from barbarism. In fact, such warnings against the Russian threat appeared regularly in European newspapers between the Napoleonic wars and the publication of the “revelatory” testament of Peter the Great. However, the link between effective defence against Russia and Polish independence was not always clearly recognised. For their part, the Poles, together with the pro-Polish section of public opinion, presented the issue of “the Polish shield” as the *sine qua non* of the effectiveness of the defence of European civilisation. Poland was to be the new “bulwark”. Ever since the November Uprising this had been one of the main arguments put forward to western governments and societies by prince Adam Czartoryski, as also during the Crimean War, while during the 1863 Uprising the Polish National Government and Polish diplomats stressed the fact that separating Russia from Europe by rebuilding an independent Polish state was the basic condition for creating a lasting peace (“*une paix durable*”).¹⁶⁸ A few years later, in Bismarck’s day, a future Poland was seen as a buffer zone separating Germany from Russia – also in Europe’s best interests.

Highlighting the threat from the “Hosudarstwo” and rejecting the slogan “for our freedom and yours”, Apollo stressed all the more strongly the role of an independent Poland as a barrier (“bulwark”) defending Europe against “barbarism”. He made use of historical arguments and cited the interests of western powers. He repeated the warnings made by Napoleon I, namely that Europe could become a “Cossack” domain, which was a point frequently made in the political publications of the day. For if Muscovy were to attack Europe “it would always come up against the wall of an armed and agrarian Poland”. This, in fact, was a traditional role for Poland, which “has always been on its guard against Mongolian entities of any description”. From

¹⁶⁷ *Ojczyzna* No. 42, 21 June 1864.

¹⁶⁸ Wereszycki, Zdrada. *Polska działalność dyplomatyczna (1860–1914)*, p. 487 ff.

among many examples that could be evoked to prove this, it was sufficient to mention Sobieski's victory in 1683 as Poland's contribution to saving Europe.¹⁶⁹

In the past, the vast Russian Empire was allowed to develop with reckless disregard for the consequences and the present blindness "of governments and peoples" prevented Europe from sensing danger. And yet a clash is inevitable, because although the West "can avoid fighting for a long time, the time will come when it will be impossible to evade it any longer" – and, what is worse – Apollo warns – this moment will be chosen by Muscovy. Therefore "it is better not to tarry – and move forward" without fear, because Muscovy must and will fall, as there are no reasons why "an enormous body which is not bound by the moral principle of unity", having a "religion without light" and being eaten up by "internal poisons" should last.¹⁷⁰

* * *

Two fragments of *Poland and Muscovy* depart, in terms of their character, from the reflections on the nature and history of the "Hosudarstwo" and the threat it posed. The first refers to the ideas for an uprising against Russia during the Crimean War and in a way is a response to the accusations of Girardin. The second discusses the peasant rebellion in the Ukraine in 1855. Both sections are actually, though to different degrees, the accounts of a participant or witness and thus constitute source texts, albeit highly subjective in their narrative and judgments of events. Although they happened in two different "regions", in Korzeniowski's view these two events were intertwined as, "objectively speaking", they were both manifestations of a movement directed against Russia as a State: they were an expression of the Poles' desire for independence and the Ruthenian peasants' desire for freedom and land. In 1864 Apollo wrote about facts which were not widely known at the time, since they were shrouded in secrecy by the people involved. Their disclosure was intended not only to expose Girardin's lie, but above all to make the wider public aware of the fact that during the 1854–1856 war the western powers wasted the best opportunity to restore the Polish State, which would

¹⁶⁹ Nałęcz-Korzeniowski. *Poland and Muscovy. Memoirs of xxx* Begun in 186...*; cf. *Ojczyzna* No. 34, 36, 49 and 50 of 11, 14, 29 and 30 June 1864 respectively. The following words ascribed to Napoleon were widely known: "Scratch a Muscovite a little and a Mongol will stand before you", and "In thirty years Europe will be free or run by Cossacks". Also H. Kamiński scared Europe with Cossacks, see Opacki. *Barbaria rosyjska*, pp. 98–99. De Custine. *Rosja w roku 1839*, Vol. 2, pp. 423–424: "Russia looks at Europe as spoils that, as a result of our feuds, sooner or later will become hers". This danger can be forestalled only by rebuilding Poland. "Solely independent Poland shall give Europe the desired certainty of peace." *Ojczyzna* No. 50, 30 June 1864. On the role of Poland as a shield protecting Europe from barbarism in the past see H. Kamiński. Cf. Opacki. *Barbaria rosyjska*, pp. 104–105.

¹⁷⁰ *Ojczyzna* No. 49 and 50 of 29 and 30 June 1864. Krasiński in March 1854: "Russia deprived of Poland will disappear from Europe; will become a morose and icy spectre, instead of impressive and dreadful reality". Krasiński. *Pisma filozoficzne i polityczne*, p. 201. Giller. *Historia powstania narodu polskiego w 1861–1864*, Vol. III, p. 313: "Thus if the Polish partition was taken away from the tsardom, its military might would be nearly halved and would cease to threaten the freedom of nations and the safety of European and Asiatic states".

have delivered Europe from the threat posed by Muscovy's imperial expansion and would have prevented the bloody reprisals against the Polish nation that were presently taking place. Apollo's narrative is a first-hand account, lacking the projection of what, after many years, became known from other sources.¹⁷¹ Yet for several decades Apollo's text, together with *Ojczyzna* where it was published, lay forgotten among many other documents of the post-January wave of emigration.

The Crimean War of 1854–1856 did not affect the economic interests of the *szlachta* (the Polish nobility) directly. Most of them waited to see what military developments would bring. In pro-independence circles – the veterans of 1831, the surviving members of Konarski's conspiracy and the youth of the 1840s generation and the Spring of Nations – the news of Russian military failures in the fighting against the Turks on the banks of the Danube was welcomed with satisfaction. "Broken into atoms, we gathered in neighbourly circles to read newspapers and to long for the French eagles", recalled one representative of the Polish landed gentry in Podolia.¹⁷² Most probably in the middle of 1854 a small group was formed, consisting mainly of landed gentry from Podolia, Volhynia and the Kiev region, with the aim of assessing, as Apollo writes, "the condition of the Hosudarstwo". They were united more by patriotic views and mutual trust than by the very close bonds of a plot or a conspiratorial organisation. Korzeniowski, who was one of the most active members of the group, called it "the Polish party of the movement in Ruthenia" ("polska partia ruchu na Rusi").¹⁷³ The road from merely exchanging thoughts about the war to the idea of taking action that could precipitate Russia's downfall – which was then generally believed to be the condition for Polish independence – was not a very long one. The party's enthusiasm was additionally fuelled by the development of the Crimean conflict: in the summer of 1853 the Russian army crossed the Prut, seizing Moldavia and Valachia, but in October of the same year the Turks defeated the Russians near the city of Oltenița. Admittedly, a month later the Turkish fleet was routed near the city of Sinop, but still, France and England responded by sending their fleets to the Black Sea, thus threatening the Russian naval base in Sebastopol, and in February and March 1854 the allied forces declared war on Russia. The Russian-Turkish conflict had become a regular war between the coalition of France, England and Turkey against Russia – and for almost a year it seemed to outside observers that Austria would join Russia. The series of unsuccessful actions taken by the Russian army on the banks

¹⁷¹ As in e.g. Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia*, Vol. 2, pp. 51–59.

¹⁷² Starorypiński, Borowski. *Między Kamieńcem a Archangielskiem*, p. 88. Korzeniowski's opinion according to which after 1849 Nikolai, certain of the ultimate suppression of the Poles, the submission of Austria and Prussia, and the weakness of the West, decided to conquer Constantinople (*Ojczyzna* No. 43, 22 June 1864) was recapitulated by Giller. *Historia powstania narodu polskiego w 1861–1864 r.*, Vol. IV, pp. 376–377.

¹⁷³ *Ojczyzna* No. 45, 24 June 1864. Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*, p. 230, in this case negating Bobrowski's real information, believing this action and Apollo's participation as implausible. Whereas in *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, p. 9 he writes that Apollo "repudiedly supported such an uprising"; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 27.

of the Danube continued: between March and June the Russian advance was halted near Silistra, where the Turks resisted it with great effectiveness. At that time French and English divisions were landing near Varna.

It was these military and political developments that were behind the idea of an insurrection against Russia in the Ukraine, in co-operation with the western armies. Korzeniowski's account indicates that initially, most likely in the spring of 1854, "the members of the movement" decided that a particularly good opportunity for cutting off the Russian army on the banks of the Danube presented itself and that the task could be carried out by partisan diversionary tactics at the army's rear in the Podolia Governorate along the Dniester. "The fire thus ignited – Apollo wrote – would rise, flaming and fatal, between the Muscovite army and the Hosudarstwo", as cutting off the communication and supply lines would force the Russians to beat a hasty retreat and would give the allies an opportunity to destroy their main forces.¹⁷⁴

In the autumn the situation changed in that Austria's stance forced Russia to evacuate Moldavia and Valachia, which were seized by the Austrian army, and this, in turn, forced the allied forces to transfer their military actions to the Crimea. The Polish concept in its original form was now complete and envisioned not only diversionary tactics to assist the allies, but also a Polish insurrection in the Ukraine, from where it was to spread to the rest of the Polish territory which was under Russian rule. The tactical goal was still to cut off the Russian army fighting in the Crimea from facilities which provided supplies and recruits, while the strategic goal was to rebuild the Polish State. What Korzeniowski presents in *Poland and Muscovy* allows us to reconstruct these concepts as follows: three Ukrainian governorates – Podolia, Volhynia and the Kiev region – which "wanted to and could rise up", were "marked as the first to enter the field of action", since "the life of the Muscovite army" depended on them and they bore the brunt of the burden of the war, which meant that resentment arising from excessive exploitation was greatest there. As Apollo wrote, "the active struggle was taken up by the *szlachta* (the nobility), who did not lack human resources at all; [...] it was spiritually ready and materially prepared". These assumptions were completed by Apollo's remarks about the theatre and direction of insurgent actions – which, in his view, would easily have cleansed the land and captured storehouses, since the forces at the Russians' disposal were relatively small. The outbreak of an insurrection in Ruthenia was to "move the Lithuanian governorates to rise up, after which Congress Poland, too, would follow, it being furthest away from the Eastern War and thus least able to affect its fate".¹⁷⁵ Such were the ideas and hopes of "the Polish party of the movement in Ruthenia", which with a little exaggeration were called "the insurrection plan".

Korzeniowski claimed that "the party of the movement" expected that the prospective uprising in the Ukraine would send a signal to the whole area of the "Taken Lands"

¹⁷⁴ *Ojczyzna* No. 44 and 45 of 23 and 24 June 1864. Cf. Giller. *Historia powstania narodu polskiego*, Vol. IV, p. 394.

¹⁷⁵ *Ojczyzna* No. 44 and 45 of 23 and 24 June 1864.

and that the Kingdom of Poland would begin to do the same. In his own words, “there was undeniable proof of the readiness and the resources of Lithuania and the Crown”.¹⁷⁶ Were there really such broad arrangements concerning an uprising between 1854 and 1855? Marcelli Handelsman, the first historian to systematically verify and describe these concepts, quotes a few loose ideas, but is more inclined to conclude that they “were floating in the air”.¹⁷⁷ What probably *was* accurate was the claim that one French battalion on the banks of the Vistula would have led the Poles to declare a national uprising. But could this “battalion” – i.e. Anglo-French political and military support for a Polish insurrection – be counted on? Observing the policy and the military actions of the western powers, Korzeniowski and others in the “movement” came to the conclusion that “the West was concerned neither about Poland nor about the great idea of liberating Europe from Muscovite violence”. These fears were expressed all the more strongly by opponents of the insurrection – a fact which Apollo tried to play down in his account with the remark that obviously nobody intended to “make rash calculations”, and thus it was decided that it was expedient to “find out about the intentions of the West clearly – and, so to speak, tangibly – at the beginning of the Eastern War”.¹⁷⁸ After a series of conferences at the manor houses of Podolia and Volhynia there was a meeting in Podbereczce at the house of colonel Marcin Tarnowski (the patron of the “members of the movement”), at which it was decided that the physician Ryszard Bielicki would be sent on a secret mission to Paris (with a passport bearing the name Beckman) as a party representative seeking advice from prince Adam Czartoryski and the French government about any further action.¹⁷⁹ Korzeniowski’s account of this episode in *Poland and Muscovy* was, in fact, the first to be published and in several cases served as the main source of information for those writing about Polish history during the Crimean War.¹⁸⁰ Ryszard Bielicki, however, was sent not only to the Hôtel Lambert, i.e. Czartoryski’s faction, as can be inferred from Apollo’s narrative, but to the whole Polish émigré community in the sense

¹⁷⁶ *Ojczyzna* No. 44, 23 June 1864.

¹⁷⁷ Marcelli Handelsman. *Adam Czartoryski*. Warszawa: Towarzystwo Naukowe Warszawskie, 1950, Vol. III, part II, pp. 482–485. In the more recent studies this caution is missing, although new sources have not been provided. See Krzysztof Karol Daszyk. *Strażnik romantycznej tradycji. Rzecz o Stefanie Buszczyńskim*. Kraków: Historia Iagellonica, 2001, pp. 26–27.

¹⁷⁸ *Ojczyzna* No. 44, 23 June 1864.

¹⁷⁹ *Ojczyzna* No. 44, 23 June 1864. Starorypiński, Borowski. *Między Kamieńcem a Archangielskiem*, pp. 88–89.

¹⁸⁰ Among others for Buszczyński *Mało znany poeta*, who was the reference for Bobrowski *Pamiętniki mojego życia*, Vol. 2, p. 55, as well as Giller *Historia powstania narodu polskiego*, Vol. IV, pp. 438–439, and after him Limanowski *Historia demokracji polskiej* in the 1923 edition – both of them make no direct reference to Korzeniowski. Giller’s account was harshly criticised by M. Handelsman (“he provides some false information”), which was correct in the sense that Giller wrote that Bielicki was advised directly by Napoleon III that peace ought to be maintained. See M. Handelsman. *Misja Ryszarda Bielickiego*. [In:] *Mickiewicz w latach 1853–1855*. Warszawa 1933, p. 69. On Bielicki’s mission see also Handelsman. *Adam Czartoryski*, Vol. III, part II, pp. 386–393, 400, 405, 422, 511, 560. Handelsman did not know Korzeniowski’s *Poland and Muscovy*.

that he was also obliged to talk to representatives of the democratic factions. Indeed, it seems that Bielicki was initially very reserved towards prince Adam.¹⁸¹

Bielicki arrived in Paris with a rather substantial proposal. The pro-independence members of “the movement” saw things very simply: a war was taking place, the Poles could contribute to victory over Russia, and so it was in the best military interests of the allied forces to make use of this contribution. Then a defeated Russia would have to be deprived of the lands she had seized in the partitions and an independent Poland would be restored in the interests of Europe. It was expected that France would eagerly take advantage of this offer of help. The decisive meeting between Bielicki and the French Foreign Minister Drouyn de Lhuys was facilitated by prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski, who actually took part in the first round of talks (at least) – something which Korzeniowski does not mention.¹⁸² Presenting the concept of insurgent partisan harrying actions at the rear of the Russian army to Drouyn de Lhuys, Bielicki – as Apollo wrote – assured him that “the Polish-Ruthenian provinces were ready and eager to fight in the insurrection, that the peasantry could easily be involved and that an allied army entering the western Polish provinces would not have to worry about any means of sustenance”. However, he also laid down a condition for this, namely the “restoration of Polish independence in the political world of Europe”.¹⁸³ On his return, Bielicki recounted drily that “the minister was very polite. He asked about many things and his questions revealed great ignorance of the relations, statistics, and even geography of the State they were fighting against”.¹⁸⁴ As for the most important issue – a declaration concerning Polish independence – no commitments were made. The idea of the uprising was suspended and the disappointment demoralised “the party of the movement”, since it was obvious to Korzeniowski and his friends that their emissary had “received a dismissive answer, stalling on the issue”, which in reality “amounted to a refusal”, and so Bielicki “came back to Ruthenia empty-handed”, as “it was obvious that French diplomacy could not believe in the strength of the life in Poland that was continually being sapped by killings. Not believing us, they did not dare to include it in their calculations”.¹⁸⁵ Polish supporters of the insurrectionary movement, who were fascinated by the power of the coalition and intoxicated with the Russians’ incompe-

¹⁸¹ See “Dziennik misji gen. Wysokiego do Turcji 1853–1855”. *Przegląd Historyczny*, Vol. 30: 1932–1933, pp. 514–515. Traces of this can be seen in Apollo’s critical remarks about Hôtel Lambert as “a party of waiting”, without which, however, it was impossible to make contact with the French government.

¹⁸² Handelsman. *Adam Czartoryski*, Vol. III, part II, p. 390. The meeting took place in late December 1854 or in early January 1855. According to Korzeniowski, reportedly several meetings took place within two weeks. Starorypiński, Borowski. *Między Kamieńcem a Archangielskiem*, p. 90: Zygmunt Starorypiński, who participated in the consultations following Bielicki’s return, says that the envoy mentioned two conversations with the minister.

¹⁸³ *Ojczyzna* No. 45, 24 June 1864.

¹⁸⁴ Starorypiński, Borowski. *Między Kamieńcem a Archangielskiem*, p. 90.

¹⁸⁵ *Ojczyzna* No. 45, 24 June 1864.

tence and failures, could not understand why the western powers did not reach for so handy a weapon as a Polish uprising at the rear of the Russian army! The allies were, after all, being given a trump card right into their hands! At one stroke the war would be won, their own forces would be spared and Muscovy would be pushed away from the borders of Europe, which would again be guarded by a strong and independent Poland. Thus the liberal West would erase the disgrace of Poland's partitions and Europe would enter an era of lasting peace... To Korzeniowski's mind there was no doubt that the western powers, by evading their responsibility to solve the Polish question, had lost the political war with Russia. And – as Apollo wrote – they were still paying for this mistake in 1863, when “Muscovy's diplomatic notes were slapping the ministers of two of the greatest and most glorious nations in the face”, by dismissing their interventions to defend the Polish Uprising, which was being bloodily suppressed. And so “the Polish cause was dead; to western diplomatic minds the Polish nation seemed like a corpse”.¹⁸⁶ Apollo laid at least part of the blame on the Hôtel Lambert, although he spared prince Adam in his criticism, as “this noble old man, [...] ravaged by suffering”, was surrounded by a cluster of “diplomatic idlers” led by Władysław Zamoyski, for whom “playing at kingdoms without any land, a king without a crown, sceptre or throne” as well as pointless diplomatic machinations became a *raison d'être*. “Thus all possible measures were used to undermine prince Adam Czartoryski's faith in the plans of the party of the movement in Ruthenia, and through him to influence the decision of the French court. Suffice it to say that the envoy of the Polish provinces could not even obtain an audience with Emperor Napoleon III”.¹⁸⁷

These accusations were unfair, as Bielicki did establish the principles of further co-operation with prince Adam and together with him prepared a note for Drouyn de Lhuys “on the means of attacking Russia at her weakest points”. The note, among other things, mentioned an uprising that could be initiated by “the movement”; it also mentioned assembling Polish troops consisting of 65 000 men and 15 000 horses. All this was made conditional on a commitment to declare Polish independence by the allied governments. Furthermore, on returning to Ruthenia, Bielicki brought with him prince Adam's declaration that “the Polish nation would not rise up and would not undertake any measures against its oppressors until it saw the allied army within its borders, [...] and until the governments recognised Poland as independent in its entire territory as it had been before the partitions. These conditions were indispensable and *sine qua non*”.¹⁸⁸ In the late spring of 1855 Bielicki went to Paris once again, but this time with funds for Czartoryski's camp which had been collected among the *szlachta* and with a declaration

¹⁸⁶ *Ojczyzna* No. 44, 23 June 1864. On the erroneous policy of western powers towards Poland during the Crimean War see also Giller. *Historia powstania narodu polskiego*, Vol. IV, pp. 380 f., 423 ff., 431.

¹⁸⁷ *Ojczyzna* No. 46, 25 June 1864.

¹⁸⁸ Handelsman. *Adam Czartoryski*, Vol. III, part II, pp. 391–392. Bielicki had with him also other political documents and was instructed to gather information about Russian army, *ibid.* pp. 393–393.

by colonel Marcin Tarnowski assuring prince Adam that the country would wait for his directives.¹⁸⁹ Yet Korzeniowski says nothing of this: could it have been that the Ukrainian emissary kept all the political declarations, assurances and arrangements to himself?

The peasants of Ruthenia were also taken into account by the movement. Korzeniowski stressed that their participation in the movement was “an indispensable condition for the success of the intended emancipation”.¹⁹⁰ Bielicki assured Drouyn de Lhuys – who, in fact, inquired about it himself – of the possible inclusion of the common people of Ruthenia in the insurgency. The memory of the not-so-distant Galician Slaughter was still fresh in everybody’s mind. In Korzeniowski’s view, the peasants of Ruthenia, “however politically underdeveloped, could quite easily be motivated for other reasons”, as the burden of war “brought the lords and the serfs closer together”. A particularly severe part of the burden was the enlistment of recruits to the Russian army, known in the villages as the “blood tax”. Nevertheless, characteristically, Apollo was against “a disturbance which would drive an armed group of youths out of their villages”. He thought a better solution was to organise “active resistance to Muscovite demands” in every village.¹⁹¹ In other words, it was mainly the Poles, meaning the *szlachta* and the members of their households, who were to fight on the battlefield. Was this view shared by other members of “the party of the movement” at that time? It was the same with the issue of the possible emancipation from serfdom which the Poles, i.e. the *szlachta*, were to grant their serfs in Ruthenia. *Poland and Muscovy* remains silent on this subject – Apollo concentrated solely on the political aspect of the struggle against Russia. Did, then, “the members of the movement” plan to enfranchise Ukrainian peasants in order to win them over for the insurrection?¹⁹² Tadeusz Bobrowski, who opposed the idea of an uprising, says that in response to Korzeniowski’s invitation to join “the movement”, he stated that if they were thinking of fighting against Russia in the Ukraine, they ought to abolish bondage and enfranchise the peasants. He had apparently even drafted an appropriate project, but no more was heard of it.¹⁹³ It seems that “the members of the movement” did not consider a proclamation of the enfranchisement of the serfs to coincide with their planned partisan warfare. If in the winter of 1855 a nationwide insurrection supported by political and military allied forces had been at stake, then this issue could have been (and in fact would have had to be) resolved: all Polish pro-independence organisations considered the problem of the emancipation of the serfs to be the most important social and political problem, although there were disagreements when it came to the extent and the character of such a reform, especially in the “Taken Lands”.

¹⁸⁹ Handelsman. *Adam Czartoryski*, Vol. III, part II, p. 511.

¹⁹⁰ *Ojczyzna* No. 45, 24 June 1864.

¹⁹¹ *Ojczyzna* No. 44, 23 June 1864.

¹⁹² See Daszyk. *Strażnik romantycznej tradycji*, p. 26.

¹⁹³ Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia*, Vol. 2, pp. 56–57: Bobrowski hid his study “in his desk” and used it a few years later in debates among the *szlachta* concerning the peasant issue.

* * *

Poland and Muscovy helps us to gain a better understanding of Korzeniowski's views on the peasant issue and in particular his relations with the Ruthenian peasantry of the Ukraine. Korzeniowski – who had been the leaseholder of Łuczyniec in Podolia since 1852 – had had the opportunity to familiarise himself with everyday life in the countryside as well as with the attitudes of peasants. According to him, a peasant from Ruthenia who is not hostile towards Poles is a “decent peasant”: he has an “unclear and confused idea” about politics, and usually “does not like the landowner nor does he trust him as such”, as he is a Pole (“*Lach*”), who “is a being that Ruthenians are not particularly fond of”. The common people are “separated from the *szlachta* not so much by their language and their Orthodox faith, as by matters of land and most of all by the poison poured into them by Orthodox priests, who are the clergymen of the Muscovite State religion”. These observations are in principle correct, but they exhibit a clearly tendentious tone. Korzeniowski believed that Ruthenian peasants had been better off in the times of the Polish Commonwealth as compared with Russian rule, when they became “*krepostny*” (legally bound), and insisted that still “Poland – Polsha – [is] their beloved dream, representing all manner of social virtue”. Admittedly, Apollo does mention the exploitation of peasants, but puts the greatest emphasis on political errors, e.g. the excessively hasty retreat of the insurgents from Ruthenia in 1831, when “Ruthenian peasants”, who had hoped for and awaited the restoration of “Poland – that is liberty and well-being”, were left to their own devices and – being confused – easily fell prey to anti-Polish propaganda “in the hands of the Muscovite army and administration”. Fortunately, “the Ruthenian peasant [soon] realised that he had won nothing in striking an alliance with Muscovy” and during Konarski's conspiracy there were already numerous instances of peasants providing help to Polish conspirators.¹⁹⁴ Thus, despite all the negative aspects of the current relationship between Poles and Ruthenians in Ruthenia – which, according to Apollo, resulted from the “poisoning” of peasants with “the Orthodox faith and the principles of the *Hosudarstwo*” on the one hand, and on the other the long-standing conflict between the mansions and the villages – the admittedly “unenlightened” Ruthenians were essentially not Muscovites. Therefore this people “sooner or later must push back the pressure of Muscovite bestiality. And if they are treated well, given work that is not beyond the capacity of their mind and spirit, in time they will support the Polish idea”. Apollo even believed that the events in the village of Sołowiówka in May 1863 were the final act of the old hostility fomented by Russia. After all, “not in vain has Polish civilisation, in accordance with God's will and humanity, continued to pour over this people – slowly, but for centuries, in an uninterrupted stream”.¹⁹⁵

This idealistic and optimistic perception of the relationship between Poles and Ruthenians provided the backdrop for Korzeniowski's account of the 1855 peasant

¹⁹⁴ *Ojczyzna* No. 45, 24 June 1864.

¹⁹⁵ *Ojczyzna* No. 46, 25 June 1864.

rebellion in the Ukraine. In 1864 Apollo was writing in response to a study which captain S.S. Gromeka, a *chynovnyk* (government official) for special tasks serving under Governor General Vasilchikov, had published in the monthly *Otechestvennye Zapiski* (Notes of the Fatherland) in 1863. This study propagated the official opinion of the Russian authorities about the anti-noble, i.e. anti-Polish character of the peasant riots, which was useful in their fight against the January Uprising.¹⁹⁶ Korzeniowski also wanted to strengthen the argument presented in Paris concerning a potential military movement at the rear of the Russian army. Moreover, as he wrote himself, he wanted to do historical justice to “this great, little-known, and what is worse, falsified incident. It was falsified also by those Poles who, having failed to join and take advantage of the movement, looked for excuses by finding fault with it and deprecating it”.¹⁹⁷ Thus, once again, Apollo contradicted the conventional wisdom that was habitually proffered at noble mansions in the Ukraine. However, it seems quite surprising that nothing in *Poland and Muscovy* nor in any other surviving text by Korzeniowski indicates any familiarity with the report of the events in *O powstaniu ludowem na Ukrainie w 1855 roku* (On the Peasant Uprising in the Ukraine in 1855), published as early as 1858 as an appendix in Zygmunt Miłkowski’s historical and political study entitled *Udział Polaków w wojnie wschodniej (1853–1856)* (The Participation of Poles in the Eastern War (1853–1856)), which Miłkowski reportedly received from “an eye-witness”.¹⁹⁸ The text is sometimes erroneously ascribed to Korzeniowski, although it has been known for a long time that its actual author was Zenon Leonard Fisz, a literary figure using the pseudonym Tadeusz Padalica. Like Apollo, he also came from the Ukraine and belonged to the same circle of young activists.¹⁹⁹ Moreover, in 1862 a succinct

¹⁹⁶ NB: clear traces of the influence of Gromeka’s study can be seen on e.g. in Waław Lasocki. *Wspomnienia z mojego życia*, Vol. 1: *W kraju*. Kraków 1933, pp. 176–180. Russian and Ukrainian studies of these events, and especially their assessment, are one-sided. The most recent Polish analysis, Elżbieta Orman. *Następstwa wojny krymskiej. Chłopskie rozruchy wiosną 1855 r. w majątkach polskiej i rosyjskiej szlachty w guberni kijowskiej*. [In:] *Polacy i ziemie polskie w dobie wojny krymskiej*. Ed. Jerzy W. Borejsza, Grzegorz P. Bąbiak. Warszawa: PISM, 2008, pp. 83–103, and the same author’s interesting monograph *Tahańcza Poniatowskich. Z dziejów szlachty na Ukrainie w XIX wieku*. Kraków: PAU, 2009, pp. 220–235 also require some correction.

¹⁹⁷ *Ojczyzna* No. 46, 25 June 1864.

¹⁹⁸ Zygmunt Miłkowski. *Udział Polaków w wojnie wschodniej (1853–1856). Z przypisem: O powstaniu ludowem na Ukrainie w 1855 roku*. Paris 1858, pp. 205–218.

¹⁹⁹ This mistake was made for the first time probably by B. Limanowski in 1903, see *Historia dyplomacji polskiej*. Ed. Zbigniew Wójcik. Warszawa: Państwowe Wydawnictwo Naukowe, 1957, Vol. 2, p. 297. After Limanowski Apollo’s authorship was recognised e.g. by Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*. [In:] *Sztuka i wierność*, pp. 28–29 and 230, which, however, he did not repeat in the monograph *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, p. 580; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 450. The most recent mention of Korzeniowski’s authorship: Orman. *Tahańcza Poniatowskich*, pp. 218 ff., 345. Zenon Fisz’s authorship: Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, p. 35, footnote 17; *Bibliografia literatury polskiej “Nowy Korbud”*, Vol. 8: *Romantyzm*. Warszawa 1969, p. 79 mentions A. Korzeniowski’s *Poland and Muscovy*, however, Zenon Fisz’s account *O powstaniu ludowem na Ukrainie w 1855 roku* is not mentioned there.

description of the peasant movement was penned by Stefan Buszczyński, Apollo's neighbour and friend in his "leasehold period" in Łuczyniec in Podolia.²⁰⁰

In brief, what contributed to the outbreak of the peasant revolt in the Ukraine was the economic and social position of peasants in the system of "serfdom". Prior to 1855 in many local riots peasants had demanded "*wola*", i.e. the annulment of personal bondage and serfdom as well as enfranchisement on the land which they cultivated. The Crimean War exacerbated these existing conflicts. When in December 1854 Nicholas I issued his proclamation on the *levée en masse* ("*opolcheniye*"), peasants in many regions of the Ukraine understood this to mean a return to the former tradition of conscription as "free Cossacks" and that every conscript would be freed from serfdom to become a free landowner. The explanations by Russian officials that this interpretation of the proclamation was incorrect was treated by peasants as a lie on the part of the local authorities, who – acting in their own interest and in that of the *szlachta* – wanted to conceal the Tsar's proclamation on "*wola*". Tensions ran higher when news of a deadline for the conscription got about: the final date was to be St. George's day, i.e. 23rd April 1855. Ruthenian peasants, whose determination was heightened by their fruitless search for the mythical tsarist proclamation, attempted to obtain the document by force from their Orthodox priests and minor officials. They even sent delegates to Kiev. Within the space of a few weeks their movement spread to the right-bank provinces of the Kiev Governorate and turned into a popular revolt. This spontaneous movement which developed in isolated regions was not the expression of a social struggle against the nobility, as its target were the Russian authorities, whom the peasants believed were guilty of withholding the tsarist proclamation. The events took not only the Russian authorities by surprise, but also the local landed gentry and those activists among the "Polish party of the movement" such as Apollo Korzeniowski, who had considered involving the Ruthenian peasantry in an uprising against Russia. This is not an insignificant detail, as it proves that the agreements made within the movement were tentative and that there was no effective communication between key activists, not to mention a correct assessment of the atmosphere of rebellion that had been brewing for several weeks among the peasantry.

The revolt and its brutal suppression by the Russian authorities had a strong and possibly even decisive impact on Korzeniowski's attitude and actions in the following years, as we can see from *Poland and Muscovy*. Hearing the news of the riots – which reached him two weeks after they had begun – Apollo set out for Skvira Province in the Ukraine and arrived in the village of Szamrajówka near the city of Bila Tserkva,²⁰¹ but this was already after the bloody epilogue, "when the peasant movement, choking on its own blood, was dying in prisons or beaten by Muscovite clubs". Recounting the events in *Poland and Muscovy*, Apollo made no mention of his own visit to the area of the revolt, stating that he had received all his information from "Ryszard

²⁰⁰ Stefan Buszczyński. *Podole, Wołyń i Ukraina*. Lviv 1863, p. 34–35.

²⁰¹ Buszczyński. *Malo znany poeta*, p. 16; Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, p. 34.

Bielicki's companion, his friend and citizen of Podolia***",²⁰² He was most probably the only member of "the Polish party of the movement" to have found himself among the Ruthenian peasants the day after the pogrom and to have personally heard their authentic tales of the events. Thus the relevant passages in *Poland and Muscovy* may be described as the memoirs of an eye-witness who has talked to the main protagonists of the drama, rather than the account of an outside observer. What is more, Korzeniowski also knew the documents of the Russian commission of inquiry, which he managed to obtain. His personal involvement helps to explain the fervour which is visible in a cycle of his poems devoted to the peasant revolt.²⁰³

What helps us verify and evaluate the documentary value of Korzeniowski's text, as well as the ideological characterisation of the events of 1855, is the fact that immediately after the peasant revolt broke out it was described by Zenon Fisz and thirty years later by Tadeusz Bobrowski, who had also been an observer, though not an eye-witness to the main events.²⁰⁴ Reading these three accounts, we may conclude that, while writing his own account, Bobrowski had access to the other two texts by Fisz and Korzeniowski, though he does not acknowledge this. Agaton Giller also relied on Fisz and Korzeniowski in his *Historia powstania narodu polskiego w 1861–1864 r.* (The History of the Uprising of the Polish Nation between 1861 and 1864).²⁰⁵ Apollo follows a story-telling convention, unlike Zenon Fisz, whose text has the qualities of a documentary/historical account, as the author provides detailed information concerning the geography of the events and the number of participants both on the peasants' side and on the Russian side. Korzeniowski writes more generally about the movement in a few provinces of the Kiev Governorate and it is only his mention of the Branicki estate and Bila Tserkva that allows us to identify the description of a clash between peasants and Russian troops that was the beginning of the bloody suppression of the movement – referred to later as "the events at Berezna". In this instance Apollo depicts the drama of 3 000 Russians attacking 6 000 peasants "in the field": "In five minutes the battalion's rifles and two cannons killed 600 people and very many were wounded". 700 people were apprehended and led to Bila Tserkva.²⁰⁶ Fisz and Bobrowski reduce the number of victims to 30 killed and over 100 wounded, with no mention of cannons.²⁰⁷ Only Korzeniowski states as a certain fact that, with deliberate malice, Governor General Vasilchikov sent soldiers recruited from the Kingdom of Poland to suppress the rebellion: these soldiers could not speak Russian, which led to the rumour that they were

²⁰² *Ojczyzna* No. 51, 1 July 1864.

²⁰³ See Najder. *Joseph Conrad's parents*, p. 21; cf. Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*, p. 28.

²⁰⁴ Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia*, Vol. 2. pp. 57–58.

²⁰⁵ Giller. *Historia powstania narodu polskiego*, Vol. IV, pp. 394–395, 428, 431–433: a view on Ruthenians and the course of events literally repeated after Apollo, while on pp. 432–443 the author quotes excerpts from Fisz.

²⁰⁶ *Ojczyzna* No. 52, 2 July 1864.

²⁰⁷ Z. Fisz. *O powstaniu ludowym na Ukrainie*, pp. 210–211; Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia*, Vol. 2, p. 58.

actually leaseholding Polish noblemen (*szlachta*) dressed up as soldiers, who were naturally hostile towards the Ruthenian peasantry. It seems that the provocation failed, since the peasants realised that “the authorities would not have armed the leaseholding *szlachta*, except to turn it against Muscovy”, i.e. themselves.²⁰⁸ What is surprising in Apollo's account is his omission of the role of Józef Rozental, who single-handedly tried to direct the movement squarely against Russia. It is difficult to believe that he had not heard about the matter, as it was widely discussed.²⁰⁹ There are other differences in details that are significant for the reconstruction of the sequence of events. For this reason, the account by Fisz is of greater documentary value. Yet, on the other hand, it was not Apollo's intention to write a chronicle of the peasant movement. His “story” posed one clear thesis: by this uprising against the Russian authorities, the Ruthenian peasant had embarked on an independent path of political development which was potentially favourable for the Polish struggle against Russia in that it opened up the prospect of uniting the forces of Poles and Ruthenians against their common enemy. The rest depended on the attitude of the Polish *szlachta*...

In presenting, and especially evaluating the development and the meaning of the peasant movement, Korzeniowski contrasted the behaviour of the Poles and the Ruthenians: “While the *szlachta* from Ruthenia were looking for support in Paris, so as not to expose the country to new wounds by an unendorsed movement, the Ruthenian peasants, just like children, who are brave out of their ignorance of danger, did not seek anyone's advice or look to anyone, but found the principle of their movement in the memory of their forefathers and the oral tradition of the Polish idea: they rose up, proving that they were capable of freedom and of human dignity”.²¹⁰ On the basis of this opposition of attitudes and the criticism of his own socio-political circle, Apollo made an assessment of the level of awareness of Ruthenian peasants and wrote a description of their movement in the spring of 1855.²¹¹ Fisz, Korzeniowski and Bobrowski all agree on the spontaneity of the peasant movement. They all write about the separate groups camping out in the fields and stress their peaceful behaviour towards manor houses and the strictly observed ban on vodka (all inns were closed!). The peasants were certain of their arguments and their majority – as “a gathering is a great man”. They were convinced that the Russian army would not use any fire-arms against them.²¹² From this “group” position they came forward with proposals for the Polish *szlachta* concerning

²⁰⁸ *Ojczyzna* No. 51 and 52 of 1 and 2 July 1864.

²⁰⁹ See Lasocki. *Wspomnienia z mojego życia*, Vol. 1, p. 176. Also T. Bobrowski is silent about Rozental, while there is a short remark about him in Fisz. *O powstaniu ludowym na Ukrainie*, p. 208.

²¹⁰ *Ojczyzna* No. 46, 25 June 1864.

²¹¹ Korzeniowski implied that (in 1854–1855 or as late as in 1864?) he considered waiting for permission from Paris as a kind of political error.

²¹² *Ojczyzna* No. 51, 1 July 1864. The phrase “an assembly is a great man” (“gromada – wielki człowiek!”) was used by Leonard Sowiński in his play *Na Ukrainie* (In Ukraine), where it is spoken by one of the characters (Poznań 1873, p. 88; “free Cossacks” are mentioned there on p. 93). The play is based on the events in Sołowiówka in 1863.

the resolution of the problem of land and serfdom after they acquired the status of “free Cossacks” – about which, on the whole, Apollo speaks approvingly. This is what the peasants were to announce to the landlords: “We can govern ourselves. [...] The lords have land and we work on it. We will sow and reap for the lord as much land as each of us receives from the lord to sow and reap for ourselves. There will be no need to urge us to work in the fields and we do not desire to do any other kind of work in exchange for cultivating the land. The land is the lord’s, since the lord has bought it, and so it would be our sin to use it for nothing, but as our fathers used to, so we also live, and so let our children live with the lords – by taking land in exchange for work in the lord’s fields. The right to sell liquor and the mills are the lord’s, but since buildings, dikes and roads are supported with our work, it is also right that one third of the income from the distilling and milling monopolies should belong to us, and two thirds to the lord”.²¹³ Fisz, in turn, informs us about much more far-reaching demands: a six-thousand-strong group decided near Korsuń that peasants were to be “free from all serfdom and [were] to be called Cossacks. [...] The land is the property of the common people and so everyone will take as much as he needs and the rest will belong to the citizen. [...] Corn [is to be] sown as it is God’s gift, sacred and needed, and beetroot is not to be cultivated as it is a German invention and there will be no hunger without it”.²¹⁴ All three accounts emphasise “the safety of people and property” and the atmosphere of law and order in the villages which were controlled by the movement, which “was limited to sorting out the relations within the rural class. Labour was liberated everywhere. Whole groups worked in their own fields and in the lords’ fields they all worked together. Strict justice and respect for other people’s property were observed. Peasant watchmen wandered about the fields making sure that no one was hurt in any way. [...] Not a single murder, nor a single injury was perpetrated”.²¹⁵ On the other hand, Orthodox priests and Russian officials were harassed, which Apollo noted with visible satisfaction.

What is contrasted with this dignified demeanour of the Ruthenian peasants is the description of the behaviour of the Polish *szlachta*: some ignored the groups of peasants, and – following the example of the Russian gentry – called for military intervention from Kiev; others, seemingly accepting the peasants’ proposals, “sneaked out of their estates as soon as they could”, guarded by Russian bayonets, which Apollo found disgraceful; finally, “the most honest ones, while accepting the proposals, avoided taking part in the movement”. Ultimately, therefore, “no one among the local *szlachta* showed enough bravery, honesty and sacrifice to support the peasants’ movement with their actions; to add their experience in life and public causes to their joint force”.²¹⁶ Korzeniowski not only criticised the *szlachta*’s fear “for their own skins”, but also believed that they should not have shirked their duty “to educate the peasants that they were to fight

²¹³ *Ojczyzna* No. 51, 1 July 1864.

²¹⁴ Fisz. *O powstaniu ludowym na Ukrainie*, pp. 209–210.

²¹⁵ *Ojczyzna* No. 52, 2 July 1864. Cf. Buszczyński. *Podole, Wołyń i Ukraina*, p. 34.

²¹⁶ *Ojczyzna* No. 51, 1 July 1864.

in order to defend their cause” and should have led them, because “every rightfully thinking Pole” was obliged to actively support any struggle against Muscovy²¹⁷ – all the more so as the Ruthenian peasants were ready to grant leadership of their movement to the Polish *szlachta* and “called on the lords to take the lead and set out against the Muscovites”.²¹⁸ Apollo did not hesitate to formulate the following accusation: “A lack of self-sacrifice means renouncing one’s Polish nationality. Renouncing this character is treason”. Therefore, for their cowardly stance the “citizens” of the Kiev Governorate “could have been charged with betraying the Polish cause and deserved to be punished”.²¹⁹ For his punch line Apollo used the words allegedly uttered by one of the peasant leaders who was put on trial: “There is no denying it. In 1831 we were fools not to have stood by the lords; now the lords are fools not to have stood by us”.²²⁰

This – in Korzeniowski’s view – wasted opportunity haunted him for the rest of his life and the emotions it generated were expressed in his later works, where we can easily find these contrasting attitudes of the peasants and the *szlachta*. This can be seen in the words: “W Ukrainie jęczą spiże / A niewiasty całe w kirze” (“In the Ukraine cannons roar / Women weep over the pall”). Or in *Requiem*: “Śpijcie snem, co spadł od kuli! / Ziemia matka was utuli, / boście ją szczerze kochali! / U Boga dwie wam zasługi: / pan was katował wiek długi, / a legliście od Moskali!” (“Slumber in your sleep that came with a bullet! / Mother Earth will comfort you, / Since you loved her so dearly! / God sees your two merits: / the lord tormented you for centuries / and you have been laid dead by the Muscovites!”), for which “szlachta wam płaci podłością, / bo szlachta – to cara dziecię!” (“the *szlachta* pays you back with vileness / for the *szlachta* – is the Tsar’s child!”). And what is more, “obywatele [...] nigdy wam nie przebaczą / waszą szlachetność wieśniacza, / że wyszli zdrowo i cali” (“the citizens [...] will never forgive you / your rustic nobleness, / and that they survived safe and sound”). By contrast, Korzeniowski condemns the behaviour of the *szlachta*, for whom “straszny swobód ogień ofiarny” (“frightful is the sacrificial fire of freedom”) and who are “z rządem w przyjaźni” (“friends with the government”) and who without scruples “krew chamską w ruble zamienia” (“turn peasants’ blood into roubles”), as “tylko w rubel święty wierzy / i umie ssać krew ludu i tą krwią handlować!” (“only in the holy rouble do they believe / and they suck the blood of the common people and then trade in it!”).²²¹ It was these very emotions that dictated the story of the peasant movement as depicted in *Poland and Muscovy*.

Korzeniowski saw the peasant movement from two perspectives. The first was political in a general sense – in his view, the attitude of the Ruthenian peasants con-

²¹⁷ *Ojczyzna* No. 51, 1 July 1864.

²¹⁸ *Ojczyzna* No. 52, 2 July 1864.

²¹⁹ *Ojczyzna* No. 51, 1 July 1864.

²²⁰ *Ojczyzna* No. 52, 2 July 1864.

²²¹ Cf. Taborski. *Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski*, pp.149–151, 154–155; Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 9–10; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, pp. 27–28. [The translation of Korzeniowski’s poetry only paraphrases its content; rhymes are not retained. Translator’s note.]

firmed the feasibility of the concepts proposed by “the Polish party of the movement”, envisioning partisan diversionary attacks behind Russian army lines, thus precipitating victory over Russia and the restoration of an independent Poland. The second was internal – this rebellion was a chance to end the national and social conflict between Poles and Ruthenians, which hitherto had weakened the forces of both sides vis-à-vis their common enemy, i.e. the “Hosudarstwo”. Apollo wrote with great conviction that the peasants’ spontaneous movement very quickly “lived up to social and civic concepts and attitudes both in actions and in words”, but ended in “martyrdom”, which shall not be futile, as it will remain “a great memento of the capacity of the Ruthenian peasants to fully develop their nationhood”.²²² From this Korzeniowski drew optimistic political prognoses for the Polish cause. Zenon Fisz in 1858 also believed that the episode was a kind of breakthrough, that the “age-old hatred for the lords” among the Ruthenians was disappearing and their pursuit of freedom had turned them into Poland’s allies, which “doubled our forces” in the future struggle against the common enemy, Russia, which was inevitable and bound to happen “sooner or later”.²²³ However, the crucial point was that the Polish *szlachta* should not waste this auspicious turn of events, which proved that “heaven itself has had mercy upon the Polish national cause”, by forgetting their duties – dictated by “conscience and the fatherland” – towards their subjects. Otherwise, a renewed conflict between the two sides must “sooner or later be resolved by means of the lance and the knife”.²²⁴ Korzeniowski, idealising the peasant movement of 1855, did not believe that such an extreme eventuality would ever arise. In *Poland and Muscovy*, he mythologised the past and spun utopian visions... There was therefore some truth in the claim – which was repeated in the conservative circles of the landed gentry in the Ukraine – that Korzeniowski “was the first to create the myth” of the political character of the peasant rebellions and Giller and Limanowski merely followed in his footsteps.²²⁵ However, the Ukrainian political movement was already looking for its own way forward and rejected Polish patronage of the Ruthenian peasant, so any co-operation was out of the question. There is no indication that Apollo entertained any hopes on this score. On the other hand, at that particular time, when he was recalling the events of 1855, the conviction was maturing in the democratic circles of the post-January émigré community that the 1863 programme of the Polish National Government proposing union and federation with Ruthenia and Lithuania was no longer sufficient and that it was more practical to think of Ruthenia as an autonomous national entity.²²⁶

²²² *Ojczyzna* No. 51, 1 July 1864. Fisz writes similarly about “instinctive pressure of collective power towards self-liberation”. *O powstaniu ludowym na Ukrainie*, p. 205.

²²³ *Ibid.*, pp. 211–217.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 218.

²²⁵ Starorypiński, Borowski. *Między Kamieńcem a Archangielskiem*, p. 149. Giller. *Historia powstania narodu polskiego*, Vol. I, p. 148, Vol. IV, pp. 385, 432–433.

²²⁶ Such views were expressed by the isolated Jarosław Dąbrowski, who came from the Zhytomyr area. See Jerzy Zdrada. *Jarosław Dąbrowski 1835–1871*. Krakow: Wydawnictwo Literackie, 1973, pp. 245–247, 295–299.

Concluding *Poland and Muscovy*, Korzeniowski noted that “the consequences of the movement under discussion had a great, albeit false impact on a section of the Polish movement” before the January Uprising, since – in his view – young conspirators from Kiev (belonging to the circle of political friends of Stefan Bobrowski) – bearing in mind the 1855 movement – believed that it was enough to approach the Ruthenian peasants with “*Złota Hramota*” (a decree announcing the enfranchisement of the peasantry) to get them to join the fight against Russia: “the young – noble and trustful – having made an unforgivable mistake, paid for it with martyrdom: as politicians they were guilty; as patriots they were saints. May these chosen souls rest in peace”. The hostility of the Ruthenian peasants towards the January Uprising – Apollo wrote several months after Sołowiówka, when hopes for western intervention had not yet faded – was being reinforced by Russian propaganda. Drawing them into the fight against Russia would be possible not by making official proclamations, but by “the emergence of a physically real Polish or foreign force, which for once would show them that supremacy over Muscovy was possible”.²²⁷

This is what Korzeniowski wrote about the peasant movement in 1864. There is some evidence which allows us to assume that his description of these events was sent to Paris in May 1855 and served as the basis for a report entitled *L'insurrection en Ukraine au mois de mai 1855 racontée par un témoin oculaire*, which Adam Jerzy Czartoryski submitted to the French Foreign Minister Drouyn de Lhuys as confirmation of Bielicki's assurances about the anti-Russian potential in the Ukraine.²²⁸ This document is not strikingly similar to (nor does it even correspond with) the description in *Poland and Muscovy*, mainly with regard to examples of the peaceful attitude of the peasants towards Polish landowners and especially their readiness to reach agreement on the question of land cultivated by peasants for their own needs and their work in the lords' fields as a form of rent, together with a demand for the removal of administrators. It also quotes the words of an old peasant who recalled how, during the 1831 insurrection, he encouraged others to join the lords to liberate the Ukraine from the Russians, but was not heeded, and so “misfortune befell both the lords and us”, which echoes the court statement (quoted above) made by one of the peasant leaders. Only these two accounts mention the fact that the peasants were dispersed with canister

²²⁷ *Ojczyzna* No. 52, 2 July 1864. This idea was repeated by Agaton Giller. *Historia powstania narodu polskiego w 1861–1864 r.* Paris 1867, Vol. I, p. 157.

²²⁸ The document was published by L. Eisenmann *Neznámý dokument o Ukrajině roku 1855*. [In:] *Z dějin východní Evropy a Slovanstva. Sborník věnovaný Jaroslavu Bidlovi*. Prague 1928, pp. 359–362 following the text from the archive of the French Foreign Ministry. Handelsman. *Adam Czartoryski*, Vol. III, part II, p. 390 said that the document was identical with the report by Agent C. from Berlin, 19 May 1855, which can be found in the Czartoryskis' Library, manuscript 5630, pp. 153–159. Hitherto no one has noticed the “affinity” of the two accounts, and the authors writing about the 1855 peasants' movement have been ignoring the document published by L. Eisenmann and the archival materials indicated by Handelsman.

shots.²²⁹ The 1855 text also contains an important piece of information, namely that the Ukrainian peasants were expecting the intervention of “the red trousers” – i.e. the French army!²³⁰ All this was reported to Napoleon III, who said to Czartoryski: “What a pity that when the latest disturbances occurred in Malorus (Little Russia), we were not able to extend our hand and make use of them”.²³¹

* * *

One of the main theses of *Poland and Muscovy* was that the factor which had had the greatest impact on the western powers since the Congress of Vienna was their fear of Russia, which – supported by Prussia and Austria – had acquired the position of arbitrator. Thus the “fearful” stance of France and England sealed Poland’s captivity. It is certain that both France and England avoided any risk of military conflict with Russia. However, Korzeniowski did not see that the main reason for this was the rivalry between Paris and London. It was only the 1853–1856 Eastern War that led to an alliance against Russia, which did not mean that the two allies had identical political goals at the very beginning of the war.

Korzeniowski and his friends welcomed the war between France, England and Turkey on the one side, and Russia on the other, as they hoped for a positive resolution of the Polish question. Apollo wrote about Russia’s defeats with obvious satisfaction: the Russian army was “squashed to a pulp at Sebastopol; the Orthodox fleets of the Black Sea were blown away to nothingness”. He expected the demise of the “Hosudarstwo” to come any day. However, in the face of the defeats, “Nicholas sacrificed himself” by taking poison, which according to Apollo had a fatal effect on Polish interests: the war with Nicholas’s Russia would have forced the western allies to assume “a stern policy”, to pose Polish independence as the aim of the war, and so to “crush Russia for the sake of world peace”. However, the new Tsar, Alexander II, accepted the peace conditions and France and England sacrificed Poland once again, which “led them from wakefulness to blindness and indifference towards Muscovy”.²³² It can safely be assumed that these views were dominant among the Poles of that period, at least in the Ukraine.²³³ It was not known that the factor which had had a decisive influence on Alexander II and on his advisors was the conviction that, in the event of a prolonged war, the western

²²⁹ Cf. *Ojczyzna* No. 51 and 52 of 1 and 2 July 1864 and Eisenmann. *Neznámý dokument*, pp. 360–361.

²³⁰ Eisenmann. *Neznámý dokument*, pp. 361–362.

²³¹ Handelsman. *Adam Czartoryski*, Vol. III, part II, p. 390.

²³² *Ojczyzna* No. 43, 22 June 1864.

²³³ Buszczyński. *Podole, Wołyń i Ukraina*, p. 5: “Only some shortsighted English politicians can fail to discern the threat to Europe posed by Muscovy”. On the “astounding blindness of Europe” see also Giller *Podróż więźnia etapami do Syberii w roku 1854*. Leipzig 1866, Vol. 1, p. 203, and *Powstanie narodu polskiego*, Vol. IV, p. 382 ff. Apollo’s view concerning the negative consequences of Nikolai I’s death for the Polish cause were fully repeated (among others) by S. Szulc. *Pamiętnik kapelana*. [In:] *Polska w walce. Zbiór wspomnień i pamiętników z dziejów naszego wyjarzmania*. Ed. A. Giller. Paris 1868, pp. 69–70.

allies could have used an anti-Russian uprising in the Ukraine as a potential weapon. Thus in St. Petersburg conclusions had been drawn from the peasant movement and the political stance of the Poles had been realistically assessed.

The end of the Crimean War and the Treaty of Paris of 1856 led Korzeniowski to accuse the western powers of wasting an opportunity provided by the victory of the allies in the Crimea: Muscovy regained its strength and effectively opposed diplomatic intervention from the West during the January Uprising. It was only a matter of time before it expanded its influence in the East. Apollo followed these events from the position of an involved observer. His judgments and opinions reflected his own experiences and disappointments. "Peace – he wrote – is a beautiful, good and true thing, but let a Muscovite partake in it and soon he will turn it into ugliness and falsehood". A real "blow for European civilisation" was that the liberal western powers had befriended "barbarism", recognising "the heir of the Huns, Mongols and Tartars, [...] the Muscovite Hosudarstwo [...] as a European state. Cholera and plague were accepted as good health, and barbarism as a force contributing to the general development and progress of Europe". Napoleon III was responsible for this "sinking into a relative friendship with the Hosudarstwo", which was, in fact, "a kind of incest that degraded this noble nation".²³⁴ By betraying moral rules in their politics, the western powers had lost the opportunity to effectively defend their interests and the rights of the Polish nation in 1863. "Just as in a human being – stressed Korzeniowski – so in nations, so in governments, wickedness sometimes leads to audacity, but only virtue gives valour that is respectable: civic valour to a human being; patriotic valour to a nation; international valour to a government".²³⁵ Such qualities were, of course, lacking in the "Hosudarstwo", owing to its very nature. But the "Hosudarstwo" was not alone in this, as not far behind it were Prussia and Austria, who were always servile and clad in Russian livery. On the opposite pole Apollo set England – which "deep down in her heart holds honesty and national dignity to be precious" – and France, since in her soul "nobility and humanity tremble, and the principles of the Great Revolution still gush forth. When all said and done, their representative is Napoleon III".²³⁶ Be that as it may, the western powers did not involve themselves in the Polish cause beyond what was dictated by their short-term interests.²³⁷ This opinion was, in fact, dominant in Polish pro-independence circles, which since 1831 had invoked the argument of applying moral rules in politics. Prince Adam Jerzy Czartoryski in his *Essai sur la diplomatie* openly expressed the conviction that politics should be guided not only by self-interest, but also by morality – the strongest bond of human Society – and considered the parti-

²³⁴ *Ojczyzna* No. 46, 25 June 1864.

²³⁵ *Ojczyzna* No. 36, 14 June 1864. Cf. Najder. *Joseph Conrad's parents*, pp. 27–28; cf. Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*, p. 35.

²³⁶ *Ojczyzna* No. 43, 22 June 1864.

²³⁷ *Ojczyzna* No. 31, 8 June 1864. Giller. *Powstanie narodu polskiego*, Vol. IV, p. 382: "Palmerston's mercantile policy", p. 427 about Napoleon III.

tioning of Poland to have been particularly disastrous for political morality. It is small wonder, then, that during the January Uprising Czarторыski's essay was reprinted.²³⁸ In 1863, in the memoranda of the insurgent Polish National Government addressed to Paris and London repeated references were made to the inalienable rights of the Polish nation and it was stressed that "the Polish question is a question of law, justice and order", and that the restoration of an independent Poland "would enhance the guarantee of law and justice that is desirable for Europe".²³⁹

The best illustration of the erroneous policy of the western powers towards Russia was – in Korzeniowski's view – the fact that since 1856 Europe had allowed itself to be deluded by Alexander II, who posed as a liberal in Russia, but, as far as Polish matters were concerned, acted in a "Satanic comedy". All "concessions" were of this character, such as the amnesty for Siberian prisoners – announced "for the eyes of Europe" – which allowed those who "had not yet rotted in exile" to return to their homes. In Warsaw the "liberal" Tsar forbade Poles even to "dream" of independence. In Lithuania "the 'liberal' Tsar liberally ate, liberally accepted lackey's poems [...] he even promised to promise something for this province, devoured by the locust of administration", after having threatened "the dreamers".²⁴⁰ These fragments of *Poland and Muscovy* have the quality not only of an observer's account, but also of a memoir revealing Apollo's critical assessment of what he saw as the reprehensible conduct of some of the members of the *szlachta* in Podolia ("spiritually related to tsarist hunters and verse mongers in Lithuania") and the tactics of the Russian authorities. Of particular interest are Apollo's remarks about Alexander II's visits to Kamenets-Podolsky, where – rejecting a Polish petition – the Tsar "flew into a rage that was so typical of a Muscovite Tsar, talking a lot but not very well and finishing with one of those great falsehoods that only the lips of a Muscovite Tsar are capable of uttering – 'remember gentlemen,' he yelled, 'remember that Podolia has always been Muscovite, it has always been Muscovy, and as it has been, so it must remain'".²⁴¹ The facts and opinions expressed in *Poland and Muscovy* complement what has been well known from other sources, such as Tadeusz Bobrowski's *Pamiętnik mojego życia* (The Memoir of My Life).

* * *

Korzeniowski breaks off at the end of 1860. In *Poland and Muscovy* he does not mention the "moral revolution" of 1861, the attitudes of the "Whites" and the "Reds", nor Wielopolski's programme, nor – what is more understandable – his conspiratorial role in the Movement Committee. He very briefly touches on the issue of agrarian

²³⁸ Adam Czarторыski. *Essai sur la diplomatie*. Paris–Marseille 1830, and (with some changes) Paris 1864. Polish translation after the 1864 edition: Paris–Toruń 2004. Fragments after the 1830 edition: Adam Jerzy Czarторыski. "Polityką kieruje nie tylko interes, ale i moralność". *Wybór myśli politycznych i społecznych*. Ed. Jerzy Skowronek. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Neriton, 1992.

²³⁹ Jerzy Zdrada. *Dyplomacja polska w latach 1860–1914*. [In:] *Historia dyplomacji polskiej X–XX w.* Ed. Gerard Labuda, Waldemar Michowicz. Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Sejmowe, 2002, pp. 406, 416.

²⁴⁰ *Ojczyzna* No. 48, 28 June 1864.

²⁴¹ *Ibid.*

reform – the abolition of peasant serfdom and the enfranchisement of peasants in Russia in 1861, which also applied to the peasants of Ruthenia. His remarks are – to use his own word – “striking” in terms of the level of idealisation and even mythologisation of the history of the peasant issue during the period of the Great Sejm and later in partitioned Poland under Russian rule. As Apollo wrote in 1863, “Poland lacked time to bring peasants into politics – both individually and collectively”,²⁴² while the Tsar, in a most “devilish” way, stole “the most vital principle of the Polish movement, [...] which since the Great Sejm [...] had not ceased to trouble the souls of Polish patriots. It was of great importance during the 1831 Uprising and became the foundation of every secondary movement; in Konarski’s conspiracy it was almost the aim itself; later it supported all forms of development, even those peaceful ones which were constantly obstructed by Muscovy; in the Agrarian Society (Towarzystwo Rolnicze) in the Kingdom of Poland it developed as an exclusively Polish idea. The principle that has always been the dream of all good Poles, i.e. those working towards the rebirth of their homeland; the principle inherited from the Constitution of May 3rd 1791, then faithfully preserved and guarded; the principle for which, for so many decades, so many thousands of Poles have perished in Siberia, or borne the rifle and the shame of the Muscovite uniform. The Hosudarstwo seized this principle in its claws in order to cut out of it the fifth act of its comedy of mock humanity”.²⁴³

Apollo was right in reminding his readers that the tsarist authorities had effectively prevented any individual attempts to emancipate and enfranchise peasants “even on pain of exile to Siberia”, that after 1831 the Polish conspiratorial movement had held that enfranchisement was a prerequisite for the success of the insurrection. However, these several sentences testify both to his idealisation – which was typical for some initiators of the 1863 movement – and to his predilection for hyperbole, which prevented him from making a reliable assessment of the peasant question in the past, as well as of the attitude of the Polish *szlachta* to it under Russian rule. And yet he himself had witnessed resistance to agrarian reform in Volhynia. Alexander Weryha Darowski in *Lament skwirski* (The Skvira Lament) succinctly expressed the reason for the landowners’ position: “źródłem odmłodzenia / Szlachecka ma być kieszenia” (“the source of rejuvenation / is to be the *szlachta*’s pocket”).²⁴⁴ Korzeniowski also wrote that by introducing the reform, Alexander II “merely wanted to buy the support of the simple-minded common people for his own rule by donating somebody else’s property to them”.²⁴⁵ Perhaps his positive assessment of the relationship between the peasants and the *szlachta* in 1855 proves that Apollo opted not for complete enfranchisement, but

²⁴² *Ojczyzna* No. 45, 24 June 1864. Miłosz. “Apollo N. Korzeniowski: Joseph Conrad’s Father”, p. 132: “For Korzeniowski the past assumed the colors of lost virtues.”; cf. Miłosz. “Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski”, p. 71.

²⁴³ *Ojczyzna* No. 48, 28 June 1864. Analogously on the peasant issue since the Great Sejm: Giller. *Historia powstania narodu polskiego*, Vol. I, pp. 142–143.

²⁴⁴ Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, pp. 159–161.

²⁴⁵ *Ojczyzna* No. 48, 28 June 1864.

for the peasants' leasing or buying the land which they had cultivated. Apollo intended to discuss this agrarian issue in his future *Polska pracująca w Hosudarstwie*, which, unfortunately, was probably never written. It is therefore difficult to give a full account of his views on the most important social problem in the Polish lands under Russian rule. This is all the more difficult as Apollo does not even mention the enfranchisement decree of the National Government announced on 22nd January 1863, nor the enfranchisement of peasants in the Kingdom of Poland introduced by the Tsar in March 1864.

* * *

How did *Poland and Muscovy* reach Agaton Giller? In Vologda and Chernihiv the Korzeniowskis were not cut off from communications with their homeland: they corresponded with their family and friends, they received newspapers and Apollo sent his literary texts and translations of Shakespeare, Victor Hugo and Dickens to the *Biblioteka Warszawska*, the *Tygodnik Ilustrowany*, *Kłosa* and the *Gazeta Polska* in Warsaw, where the texts were published without any problems between 1862 and 1868.²⁴⁶ In Chernihiv they were visited by Tadeusz Bobrowski and Teofila Bobrowska, Ewelina's mother, lived with them for some time. Owing to their poor health, Ewelina and Konrad were allowed to spend some time with their family in the Ukraine.

The lack of any mention of the enfranchisement ukase of 2nd March 1864 shows that *Poland and Muscovy* was written between the summer and late autumn of 1863, i.e. while the January Uprising was still in progress. Sending such a text by post was therefore impossible, as the police kept a continual watch on the Korzeniowskis. Some other, safer way must have been used. It would be difficult to suppose that there was some channel connecting the homeland with insurgent branches abroad, though such a possibility cannot be excluded. Most probably the potential offered by family contacts was used. Tadeusz Bobrowski informed Józef Rolle in 1884 that Apollo "also wrote his memoirs about the movement period, but he never read them to me. I only knew about their existence from my mother, who was very attached to her son-in-law".²⁴⁷ Was it the case, perhaps, that this energetic elderly lady, who later looked after Konrad in Krakow, played the role of conspiratorial courier? It is quite likely and very much in keeping with the style of those times, especially if we remember that Ewelina's mother came from a family that had been involved in the 1831 uprising, for which it was punished by having its estate confiscated.²⁴⁸ Or perhaps the intermediary was Kazimierz Kaszewski, whom Apollo regarded as his Warsaw confidant. Either way, this must have been a special occasion, involving one other trusted person, since the package containing the manuscript was delivered to Giller personally. Korzeniowski's aim was surely to add his voice to the ongoing discussion on the Polish question and the policy of Muscovy. Perhaps at the same time Korzeniowski also sent Giller his text entitled *Polska książka pacierzy i modłów* (The Polish Prayer-Book), which he

²⁴⁶ See Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, pp. 118–121, 135–136.

²⁴⁷ Rolle. *In illo tempore...*, p. 33.

²⁴⁸ See Najder. *Joseph Conrad's parents*, pp. 22–23; cf. Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*, p. 30.

had written in the Warsaw Citadel.²⁴⁹ The whole operation probably took several weeks. It is therefore possible that Giller received the manuscript in the early spring of 1864, perhaps in April, as he started publishing *Ojczyzna* on 1st May 1864 and the first instalment of *Poland and Muscovy* appeared in the 27th issue on 3rd June 1864.

* * *

Poland and Muscovy was intended to be an indictment of Russia. The selection of historical arguments and the means of expression used, which showed Apollo's great emotional involvement, were to serve this purpose. Could such a publication influence a western reader, convince him or shape his attitude towards Russia and towards Poland, which is what Korzeniowski desired? The answer to this question is not easy. Many of Apollo's arguments can be found in numerous political pamphlets written in an atmosphere (partially inspired by the Poles themselves) of sympathy and support for the Uprising among people in France and England. Opponents of the Polish cause, usually representing the Russian side, also expressed their views, which sometimes overlapped with views on the "objective" necessity of maintaining European peace. A very animated debate took place during 1863, creating the atmosphere of a battle for Poland; in the end, however, it did not produce any real solution: the western powers did not provide the help which the January Uprising needed.

Poland and Muscovy was published after the fall of the insurrection, in Polish only and in a periodical known only in the circles of the last remaining participants and supporters of the January Uprising. The polemic with Girardin did not cause any ripples and it is doubtful whether the French publisher even knew about it. Korzeniowski's arguments failed to interest European commentators, so it can be said that his efforts were futile. In the summer of 1864 the issue of the Uprising and the Polish struggle against Russia was already a peripheral matter for the western press. The black picture of the "Hosudarstwo" only confirmed what Russia's opponents already knew. The warnings against the imperial threat posed by Muscovy – which, as we know, had also been voiced by others – were "drowned out" because, owing to a shift in the distribution of power between European states, what was closer and more expedient in the diplomatic games of the day were the demands of current policy, which was designed to win Russian support for France and Germany as a prerequisite for winning the race for primacy in Europe. Of course, it was well known in political chancelleries and salons that the origin of these changes was the policy of the western powers towards the Polish cause, which had been conducted so disastrously in 1863, but for that same reason it was more expedient to be silent about Poland now. What still reminded the western powers about their responsibility were the *Studia dyplomatyczne* (Diplomatic Studies) by Julian Klaczko, which were published in the *Revue des Deux Mondes* and which had a wide readership.²⁵⁰

²⁴⁹ See Halina Florkowska-Frančić. *Emigracyjna działalność Agatona Gillera po powstaniu styczniowym*. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1985, p. 30.

²⁵⁰ See Zdrada. *Zmierzch Czarторыskich*, p. 56 ff.

The wider public – both Polish and foreign – was now interested mainly in martyr-ology. The prologue of *Poland and Muscovy* was in tune with this, describing the last moments of Apollo's imprisonment in the 10th Pavilion of the Warsaw Citadel. However, in this field Korzeniowski was outdistanced by others writing about the fate of the prisoners in the Citadel and about the Siberian exiles, whose memoirs and accounts were being published at that time, and in particular the *Mémoires d'un prisonnier* by Henryk Kamieński, which appeared in the Parisian *Le Temps* in 1865.²⁵¹ Similarly, we do not know to what extent *Poland and Muscovy* interested the agents of the Third Section, which infiltrated the post-January émigré community, since in *Raporty szpiega* (The Spy's Reports) by Bałaszewicz-Potocki there are no reports from 1864.²⁵² *Poland and Muscovy* was important for the last remaining supporters of the Uprising because it confirmed their own assessments of Russia. Agaton Giller, an exile himself, was in complete agreement with Korzeniowski. "I have never read," he wrote to Buszczyński, "a more distinct characterisation of Muscovy. To write like this one must love and hate with all one's heart. However, not only are the language and the style striking in this work; the power of conviction and the passion of a great soul render it original".²⁵³ Nevertheless, deliberations on the nature of the "Hosudarstwo" had lost their meaning as the émigrés and the country were now facing new problems ensuing from the fall of the January Uprising: adjusting to the enfranchisement of the peasants, surviving new repressions and even searching for some kind of settlement, which also applied to Poles living under Russian rule – and together with all this the awareness of the fact that the current balance of power was not one that favoured a renewed fight for independence. The time of agitation was becoming history; in the three partitions the era of *Realpolitik* was now beginning... And in this reality there was no place for Apollo Korzeniowski – "the last Romantic".

Korzeniowski's reports on the ideas of the movement in the Ukraine between 1854 and 1855 and on the Ruthenian peasants' revolt in 1855 are of documentary value – although, of course, we must bear in mind the large dose of subjectivity they contain. Giller eagerly published the text in *Ojczyzna* and soon afterwards he used it in his *Historia powstania narodu polskiego w 1861–1864 r.* Nevertheless, both accounts have faded into oblivion. Perhaps this was Korzeniowski's greatest failure – a failure which has persisted until very recent times.

²⁵¹ Kamieński. *Wspomnienia więźnia*, pp. 14–18; introduction by B. Zakrzewski.

²⁵² Bałaszewicz-Potocki, threatened with being exposed in Paris in late 1863, was transferred to London where until 1875 he very successfully infiltrated Polish and Russian emigration. Hitherto only his reports beginning with January 1865 have been found, including e.g. A. Giller's letters, who published some letters from the secret agent in *Ojczyzna* in 1865. See Gerber. *Z dziejów prowokacji*, pp. 57–58, 61, 77, 95–98.

²⁵³ Buszczyński. *Mało znany poeta*, p. 43. This was expressed in A. Giller's accounts published two years later *Podróż więźnia etapami do Syberii w 1854 r.*, Vols. I–II and *Opisanie zabajkalskiej krainy w Syberii*. Leipzig 1867, Vols. I–III. See J. Fiećko. *Rosja, Polska i misja zesłańców* and *Rosja w zwykłych tekstach Agatona Gillera*. [In:] *Polacy i Rosjanie. Poljaki i russkie*, pp. 121–127.

Poland and Muscovy was one of many treatises devoted to the relations between Russia and Europe in the context of the Polish question which – in the period between the January Uprising and World War I – attempted to show a way out of the European stalemate caused by the partitions of the Polish Commonwealth and the struggle to restore an independent Polish State. Only some of them gained lasting prominence in the history of Polish political thought in the post-partition era, an example being *Rosja i Europa. Polska* by Henryk Kamieński, which is chronologically the closest to Korzeniowski's treatise, as it appeared in 1857. In both works we can find similar opinions, e.g. on an independent Poland as a shield protecting Europe from barbarism and stabilising the balance of power on the continent.²⁵⁴ What makes the two works totally different, however, is the assessment of the state of Russian Society. The answer to the question whether Korzeniowski knew Kamieński's work remains open: in *Poland and Muscovy* there is nothing to prove it. In any case, during the period of the January Uprising Kamieński's historiosophic treatise – in which, after a very critical analysis of the condition of "Muscovy", he finally concludes that an agreement between a democratic Poland and a democratic Russia is necessary – was also largely ignored. Be that as it may, it surpasses Apollo's polemical political text in terms of argumentation and language. Searching for similarities or borrowings is futile (as long as we are not dealing with polemics) in the sense that what inspired both writers was the main problem: the Polish-Russian conflict. The rest depended on the context: some, like Kamieński, stressed the need for co-operation, while others, like Korzeniowski, Buszczyński or Giller, saw only one prospect – that of a fight to the death.

* * *

After the Korzeniowskis were sentenced to exile, Governor-General Vasilchikov decided that "the whole Bobrowski family [was] politically suspect to the highest degree", and ordered the police "to extend strict secret supervision over all the activities of Tadeusz Bobrowski and his mother".²⁵⁵ Tadeusz Bobrowski was not aware of this, as in his *Pamiętnik (Memoirs)* he recalled with satisfaction that he had good relations with the Russian administration. What was particularly damaging for the Korzeniowskis was the outcome of the interrogations of the captured organisers and leaders of the January Uprising. Apollo's name appeared in the testimonies of Oskar Awejde, Karol Majewski and Władysław Daniłowski, and his role as a founding member of the Municipal Committee was revealed.²⁵⁶ The Commission of Inquiry did not resume the case against the Korzeniowskis, but as a result of these facts Viceroy Berg rejected their request that he relax the severity of their exile and that they be allowed

²⁵⁴ Opacki. *Barbaria rosyjska*, pp. 104–105.

²⁵⁵ *Ruch społeczno-polityczny na Ukrainie 1856–1862*, p. 258: Vasilchikov to P.I. Hesse 24 April 1862.

²⁵⁶ *Zbiór zeznań śledczych o przebiegu powstania styczniowego*. Wrocław: Ossolineum, 1965, pp. 22, 102; *Zarys powstania styczniowego opracowany w warszawskiej Cytadeli*. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich, 1985, pp. 53, 60, 89, 109.

to return to the Kingdom of Poland or to Volhynia – which, given the charges made against them, appeared to them to be inexplicable chicanery. What added to their misfortunes was the grave illness of Ewelina, who less than two years after moving to Chernihiv died of tuberculosis (18th April 1865). Having been bereaved, Apollo then went through a particularly difficult time. He himself was gradually being destroyed by incipient tuberculosis and heart disease. Some say that he sank into mysticism.²⁵⁷

In December 1867 Apollo was granted permission to leave Russia for health reasons. He stayed briefly with Tadeusz Bobrowski, who had been looking after Konrad for a year. Leaving the Ukraine, he is reported to have told a group of friends bidding him farewell that Poland was threatened with annihilation “in the jaws of the Muscovite Leviathan”.²⁵⁸ This pessimism, which emanates from the pages of *Poland and Muscovy*, stayed with Korzeniowski for the rest of his days. He lived with Konrad in Lwów for a year, while he made attempts to halt the progress of his illness, but to no avail. He was remembered as being “pale, dark-haired with a long beard, extremely wan and sad”. Others added that his was “an image worthy of Grottgger’s pencil”.²⁵⁹ He renewed some contacts and made literary plans. He did not understand the situation in Galicia at the beginning of its autonomy and was very critical of people and political relations there. In the spring of 1869, hoping to work with the daily newspaper *Kraj* (Homeland), he moved together with Konrad to Cracow.²⁶⁰ However, he was already terminally ill. He died on 23rd May 1869. This is how Joseph Conrad remembered a moment shortly before his father’s death: “the last time I saw him out of bed. His aspect was to me not so much that of a man desperately ill as mortally weary – a vanquished man”.²⁶¹

* * *

The decisive period in Korzeniowski’s life – which gives him a place in history – is that between May and October 1861 – when, under his influence, the pro-independence camp consolidated in the name of the struggle against Russia, as Apollo did not believe in compromise and concessions. Towards the end of his life,

²⁵⁷ This thesis has been negated in Z. Najder. “Introduction”. [In:] *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. XVI; cf. Z. Najder’s introduction to *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 24; cf. Najder. *Joseph Conrad’s parents*, p. 34 ff.; cf. Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*, p. 41 ff. Chernihiv: Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, pp. 115–121; Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 23–27; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, pp. 47–52; Jean-Aubry. *The Sea Dreamer*, pp. 28–34; cf. Jean-Aubry. *Vie de Conrad*, pp. 26–31.

²⁵⁸ *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 155; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 2, p. 205.

²⁵⁹ *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 138; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 2, p. 224; Roman Dyboski on the story by Jadwiga Kałuska née Tokarska.

²⁶⁰ Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, p. 122 ff.; Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, p. 31 ff.; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, p. 58 ff.

²⁶¹ Qtd. in Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, p. 34; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, p. 63. *Koleje życia 1866–1869*: Najder. *Joseph Conrad’s parents*, p. 33 ff.; cf. Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*, p. 40 ff.; Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, p. 26 ff.; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 52 ff.

recalling the five months of conspiracy in Warsaw, he wrote: "I count [them] as the most beautiful moments in my life as a human being and as a Pole".²⁶² His attitude can well be illustrated by what he confided to his friend Stefan Buszczyński: "I am a monk and moreover a simple *frater* in the Polish Order. My thoughts are confined to a small cell of patriotism; I am moved only by what directly leads me and mine towards our desired goal".²⁶³

The portrayal of Apollo as an educated and honest man, who was a sincere and energetic democrat, a farsighted organiser and an effective conspirator and who "had two passions in life: literature and politics" is quite convincing. Nevertheless, he also had many qualities of "an impractical and indolent day-dreamer".²⁶⁴ It is true that even his critics in the camp of his political opponents saw him as a man of integrity and noble intentions, yet they considered the political road he had chosen to be as disastrous as it was insane and deemed his social views to be radical. Many years later his ideological opponents stressed the fact that Apollo "had a violent temperament and extreme beliefs",²⁶⁵ though in the moderate circles of the so-called "*millenerzy*" and in the "white" camp it was fairly easy to earn the title of a radical. With the passage of time after the January Uprising this portrayal of Korzeniowski was preserved – in one way or another – by Mikołaj Berg, Walery Przyborowski and Agaton Giller. And the longer after 1863, the more frequently were these labels used – often as expedients in a given political situation, being a tool in the hands of opportunists who rejected the January tradition as an example of national madness. Bobrowski even questioned Apollo's democratic sincerity. Apollo's "Committee" brother-in-law, far from subscribing to "political-cum-patriotic illusions", presented himself as a more "progressive" person than a writer who was "bereft of land or souls", whom he treated with patronising and prejudiced disdain.²⁶⁶

Korzeniowski represented a circle of people who most closely combined the struggle for independence with a programme of democratic reforms. Membership of the "red" camp, which formed the Movement Committee, meant total acceptance of the main principles of the programme of the Polish Democratic Society (Towarzystwo Demokratyczne Polskie), i.e. the idea of a military struggle and the enfranchisement of peasants on

²⁶² Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, p. 112. *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, 121; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 216; to S. Buszczyński 12 October 1868.

²⁶³ Qtd. in *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 117; cf. Z. Najder's introduction to *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 24. S. Buszczyński wrote in the obituary: "He expired like a soldier in his post, having sacrificed his whole life for his fatherland, afflicted for a long time with bullets of universal misfortune". *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 56.

²⁶⁴ See Najder. "Introduction". [In:] *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. XIV–XV; cf. Najder's introduction to *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, pp. 21–22.

²⁶⁵ Ignacy Baranowski. *Pamiętniki (1840–1862)*, Poznań 1923, p. 369.

²⁶⁶ Czesław Miłosz was "taken in" by Bobrowski's rhetoric: Miłosz. "Apollo N. Korzeniowski: Joseph Conrad's Father", pp. 122–123, 130–132, 134; cf. Miłosz. "Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski", pp. 61, 69–70, 74.

the land cultivated by them, as well as the granting of property to landless peasants fighting as soldiers in the national cause, with appropriate compensation for the *szlachta*. This is what was declared in the insurrection manifesto of 22nd January 1863. Like all Polish patriots of his time, Korzeniowski was in favour of the unification of the territory of the former Polish Commonwealth within the borders of 1772. This was his territorial programme of restoring an independent Poland. At the same time, he believed that the problem of ethnic differences in the Ukraine could be solved to the mutual advantage of Poland and Ruthenia by means of a new union and political reforms, heralded by the tripartite seal of the National Government bearing the Polish Eagle, the Lithuanian Pahonia (in Polish *Pogoń*) and the Ruthenian Archangel. If Apollo made frequent references to the tradition of the Polish Commonwealth of the Great Sejm period (also in *Poland and Muscovy*) it was not because he dreamed of returning to the constitutional form of the Polish State of that time. His veneration of the Constitution of May 3rd 1791 was not a dream about going back to that legal system, as Bobrowski would have us believe,²⁶⁷ but a reference to events that testified to the strength of a nation which was undertaking a programme of political and social reform for the sake of independence. For Apollo, facing the inevitability of military conflict, the main priority was the unity of Polish Society. Hence he was prone to idealise and even mythologise Poland's past whenever his dreams got the better of rational judgment. Among his views, besides an admiration for the French Revolution of 1789, which had given Europe the principle of "unyoking Man in Society" (i.e. *liberté, égalité, fraternité*) there was also the cult of Napoleon, which at that time was typical for Poland as a whole.²⁶⁸ His treatise also contains the following digressions, which require no comment: "we can safely say that the most difficult work was placed on the shoulders of Poland and France. Poland bore the burden of constant guardianship and ceaseless fighting; France bore the burden of fighting and the sowing and spreading of the civilisation of thought. Poland, as if by revelation, possessed almost all that humanity strove for – if not in full bloom then in principle; what was left for her to do was to grow and blossom – and, with arms at the ready, guard Europe so that barbarism did not hinder the march to ever higher spheres of progress. France, with the power of her spirit, disseminated the spirit of civilisation throughout Europe. [...] Poland was homely life and arms; France was social life and speech".²⁶⁹

Korzeniowski's writings also show some contradictions which are seemingly easy to interpret, as for instance the fact that while he was fascinated by English liberalism as the foundation for modern economic development, he was decidedly critical of "the sugar industry capitalism" of the Polish landed gentry in the Ukraine. Like Józef Ignacy Kraszewski (among others), he defended the local farming tradition above all out

²⁶⁷ From Bobrowski's 'Memoirs'. [In:] *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, pp. 17–18; cf. Bobrowski. *Pamiętnik mojego życia*, Vol. 1, p. 427.

²⁶⁸ *Ojczyzna* No. 34 and 35 of 11 and 12 June 1864.

²⁶⁹ *Ojczyzna* No. 49, 29 June 1864.

of fear of a possible strengthening of economic ties between the “Taken Lands” and the rest of the Russian Empire.²⁷⁰ He was one of those who believed that what could stand against Russia was a barrier formed by an independent Poland – a strong... agricultural state. Here one can hear the sigh of a Romantic leaseholder, longing for the good old days when – as he believed – the villages and the lords’ mansions were bound by patriarchal ties and – as he himself had hardly ever experienced any conflicts with peasants, he was ready to regard the harvest festival tradition as a genuine expression of the feelings of the countryside, on which something stable could be built and which could be relied on in times of crisis.

* * *

It is believed that “Conrad’s well-known anti-Russian trauma was undoubtedly shaped when he was still in his childhood, under the influence of the views of Apollo the exile, as documented in [...] the study *Poland and Muscovy*”. And also that “the convergence between the moral attitude documented by Apollo Korzeniowski’s life and the one that we know from Conrad’s writing is visible and most likely not accidental. It proves the great influence that the unshaken Chernihiv exile must have had on the formation of his beloved son’s mentality – and, indirectly, on the character of his future literary output”.²⁷¹ These general suppositions and opinions serve as interpretational decorations. Things were not as simple as they now seem.

What Ewelina and Apollo personally taught little Konrad in Chernihiv was – among other things, or rather above all – history. We can assume that this home schooling instilled in Konrad what his parents believed about the political condition of Poland, the 1863 insurrection and their attitude to “Muscovy”. It was Apollo’s great concern “to bring up Konrad not as a democrat, aristocrat, demagogue, republican, monarchist or as a servant and flunkey of those parties – but only as a Pole”.²⁷² In Lwów, at the home of the Tokarski family, little Konrad is said to have recited *Pan Tadeusz* and acted in children’s plays which included scenes of insurgent camps, patriotic songs and “battles with the Muscovites”.²⁷³ Joseph Conrad confirmed this himself when in 1914 he said: “The Polishness in my works comes from Mickiewicz and Słowacki. My father read [Mickiewicz’s] *Pan Tadeusz* aloud to me and made me read it aloud. Not just once or twice. I used to prefer *Konrad Wallenrod*, *Grażyna*. Later I preferred Słowacki.

²⁷⁰ Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, p. 18; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, p. 40; Najder. *Joseph Conrad’s parents*, p. 26; cf. Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*, p. 33.

²⁷¹ Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, pp. 128 and 130. Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 353, 415–416; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. II, pp. 75 and 165–166 writes that Conrad’s *Autocracy and War* was inspired by what he “may have absorbed [...] from Apollo Korzeniowski and Stefan Buszczyński. The question of heritage cannot be resolved [...]” The case of *Under Western Eyes* is analogous.

²⁷² *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 113; cf. Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, p. 129; to S. Buszczyński 17 March 1868.

²⁷³ *Conrad under Familial Eyes*, p. 139; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 2, pp. 224–225; J. Tokarska-Kałużka’s account related by R. Dyboski.

You know why Słowacki? *Il est l'âme de toute la Pologne, lui*. [He is the soul of all Poland]”.²⁷⁴ Apollo therefore led him along his own path, as it were, for as long as it was possible – but Słowacki was Conrad’s own choice. Did Apollo inculcate his son with his deep conviction that “Muscovy” was the evil “Hosudarstwo”? In my opinion we can say, without committing a major error of judgment, that *Poland and Muscovy* was beyond the young Konrad’s mental capacity, but did the later Joseph Conrad ever read it? It is assumed that “Later, Conrad must have read his father’s treatise”,²⁷⁵ but to me this seems rather doubtful.

One reason for this is that – for many years – all that Conrad knew about his father was what he had remembered as a boy in the last days of Apollo’s life, over which all kinds of images from various places and times had been superimposed. More importantly, he saw his father through the eyes of his uncle, Tadeusz – who, in his letters – without much concern for accuracy – informed Konrad about the vicissitudes of his parents’ life together. The image was completed by Bobrowski’s *Memoirs*, which Conrad trusted.²⁷⁶ It must be remembered that between 1861 and 1865 Korzeniowski distanced himself from Tadeusz Bobrowski. Apollo’s involvement in the movement, his imprisonment and subsequent exile had erected a barrier between the conspirator and his brother-in-law, whose cautiousness bordered on opportunism. Bobrowski helped his sister move from Zhytomir to Warsaw, but Ewelina, it seems, did not receive any financial help from him. Later Tadeusz explained this to Konrad by saying that the difficult financial situation of his parents was... unknown to him. It is symptomatic that, while in exile, the Korzeniowskis were discreetly supported by Kazimierz Bobrowski, Ewelina’s youngest brother, whose ideological views were most likely different from those of Tadeusz.²⁷⁷ The barriers that had arisen over time never came down: the correct relations visible from the outside were dictated by Bobrowski’s social position, the memory of Ewelina, his duties towards Konrad and probably also the position of Teofilia Bobrowska, whose opinion Tadeusz had to respect. He gave vent to his real feelings in his *Memoirs* and partly in what he told and taught Konrad.

²⁷⁴ Qtd. in Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, p. 27; cf. Najder *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, p. 53.

²⁷⁵ Miłosz. “Apollo N. Korzeniowski: Joseph Conrad’s Father”, p. 137; cf. Miłosz. “Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski”, p. 77.

²⁷⁶ Najder. *Joseph Conrad’s parents*, pp. 39–42; cf. Z. Najder. *Rodzice Conrada*, pp. 46–48; Najder. *Joseph Conrad and Tadeusz Bobrowski*, pp. 59–64; cf. Najder. *Conrad i Tadeusz Bobrowski*. [In:] *Sztuka i wierność*, pp. 66–70; Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 391–392; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. II, p. 130. See *Conrad’s Polish Background. Letters to and from Polish Friends*. Ed. Zdzisław Najder. London: Oxford University Press, 1964, pp. 183–184; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, p. 62.

²⁷⁷ See *Conrad’s Polish Background*, pp. 183–185; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 1, pp. 62–63. NB: Kazimierz’s son – Stanisław Bobrowski – was arrested by Russians in 1892 for illegal educational activity among factory workers: Joseph Conrad to Maria Tyszkowa. London, 8 September 1892. Trans. Halina Carroll-Najder. [In:] *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, Vol. I, pp. 114–115; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 2, p. 32.

After many years, Joseph Conrad wrote about the last phase of his father's life: he was "a man of great sensibilities; of exalted and dreamy temperament; with a terrible gift of irony and of gloomy disposition; withal of strong religious feeling degenerating after the loss of his wife into mysticism touched with despair. His aspect was distinguished; his conversation very fascinating; his face in repose sombre, lighted all over when he smiled".²⁷⁸ Although Conrad swore: "I remember him well", this remarkably short description is too similar to what uncle Tadeusz had told him about Apollo for this assurance to be credible. After his wife's death – as we read – "poor Apollo sank [...] into deep mysticism, and wrote only prayers and a prayer-book, and although he had always claimed that he was a devout Catholic, his Catholicism, indeed, even his Christianity were of a mystical Polish colour and strongly bordered on heresy both towards religion and towards reason. In a word, he was a sad ruin of feelings and thoughts, that were experienced, suffered, wept for and hopeless. [...] His was a noble soul that loved its Fatherland deeply and was full of illusions and had no regard for reality, and was not soberly aware of either people or human matters – a soul from that unhappy epoch that measured its strength according to its intentions, and not its intentions according to its strength. And he died – as so many did – in vain! He considered himself a democrat, but was only 'a well-born altruist', who loved the little people, but could neither advise them nor help them, because he was an idealist".²⁷⁹ There can be no doubt: Bobrowski – a kind of know-all – did not like Korzeniowski.²⁸⁰ This was not the first time that a "sober" mind could not come to an understanding with someone who was governed by the "reason of passion" ("rozumny szalem")...

It was only after many years – thanks to contacts with his fellow countrymen – that Joseph Conrad gradually began to "rediscover" not so much his father, as Apollo Korzeniowski.²⁸¹ Only then did he fully comprehend his father's attitude and his tragic life, which was the price he had paid for his beliefs and aspirations. Once again he saw the image of Apollo's funeral in Cracow, that "bare-headed mass of work people, youths of the University, women at the windows, school-boys on the pavement, [who] could have known nothing positive about him except the fame of his fidelity to the

²⁷⁸ Joseph Conrad to Edward Garnett. Pent Farm, 20 January 1900. [In:] *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, Vol. II, p. 247; cf. Conrad. *Listy*, p. 175.

²⁷⁹ Rolle. *In illo tempore...*, pp. 33–34.

²⁸⁰ Najder. *Joseph Conrad and Tadeusz Bobrowski*. [In:] *Conrad in Perspective. Essays on Art and Fidelity*, p. 50; cf. Zdzisław Najder. *Nad Conradem*. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1965, pp. 49–50; Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, p. 36 ff.; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. I, p. 66 ff.

²⁸¹ Joseph Conrad to Wincenty Lutosławski. Ivy Walls Farm. Stanford-le-Hope, 9 June 1897. Trans. Tadeusz Sławek. [In:] *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, Vol. I, pp. 357–358; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 2, pp. 40–41; Conrad to W. Lutosławski 9 June 1897; Joseph Conrad to Kazimierz Waliszewski. Pent Farm, 5 December 1903. Trans. Halina Carroll-Najder. [In:] *The Collected Letters of Joseph Conrad*, Vol. III, pp. 88–89; cf. *Polskie zaplecze Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. 2, p. 74; to K. Waliszewski 5 December 1903. See Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 461–462; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. II, pp. 233.

one guiding emotion in their hearts. I had nothing but that knowledge myself; and this great silent demonstration seemed to me the most natural tribute in the world – not to the man, but to the Idea”²⁸² How deep was this emotion? Perhaps *Prince Roman*, the story of an exile in Siberia (prince Sanguszko) is not Joseph Conrad’s “only work devoted fully to the Polish subject matter”²⁸³ but, in fact, a work inspired by the fate of his parents or written in homage to them?

Translated by Ewa Kowal
(revised by R.E.P.)



²⁸² Conrad. *A Personal Record*, pp. 6–7; comp: Joseph Conrad. *Ze wspomnień*. Warszawa: Państwowy Instytut Wydawniczy, 1934, p. 11.

²⁸³ See Taborski. *Apollo Korzeniowski*, p. 129. Najder. *Joseph Conrad. A Life*, pp. 421–422; cf. Najder. *Życie Josepha Conrada-Korzeniowskiego*, Vol. II, pp. 174–175.